

THE
MAN OF BUSINESS,
A
COMEDY.

As it is ACTED at the
Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden.

A NEW EDITION.

By GEORGE COLMAN.

——— *Mihi res, non me rebus submittere conor.* HOR.

L O N D O N,
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TO THE HONOURABLE
CONSTANTINE JOHN PHIPPS.

S I R,

WERE the motives of dedication candidly acknowledged, perhaps it would appear that authors in general rather intend a compliment to their own vanity, than to that of their patrons. Patron, I flatter myself, will, in the present instance, appear to You too cold and distant an expression; and though I entertain all due respect for superior rank and situation, and am happy in seizing an opportunity of declaring to the world that I am honoured with the friendship of Mr. Phipps, yet never was there an epistle of this nature, in which mere vanity had a more inconsiderable share; nor should I be thus proud of proclaiming my affection for him, were I not convinced of his being possessed of qualities and accomplishments that would distinguish and adorn the most humble, as well as the most elevated situation.

In the midst of the most familiar intercourse, I should be loth to forfeit in any degree the partiality you are pleased to shew me, by the smallest appearance of flattery. But when I do but echo the voice of

all those who are acquainted with your public or private character; when I barely observe, that in an age of the most unbounded dissipation, You have devoted your time to the attainment of all useful and elegant knowledge; joining to the most amiable disposition the most unshaken integrity, as well as a thorough acquaintance with the constitution of your country, together with the most able and faithful discharge of the duties of your profession—when I just faintly sketch these outlines of your character, it will, I hope, rather be supposed that I presume to hint to you what the world seems to expect from a young man of fashion of so great promise, than that I mean to corrupt you, or degrade myself, by idle compliment and mean adulation.

Of the Comedy which I now present to you, I will venture to say but little. It is difficult for any man to speak with a tolerable grace of himself, and literary performances ought to be their own recommendation; yet I will not scruple to confess, that if I thought it entirely despicable, I would not solicit your acceptance of it. Three of the great writers, enumerated in the Prologue, Plautus, Terence, and Marmontel, have contributed to enrich it. A play lately exhibited on the French stage, the Deux Amis of M. Beaumarchais, also suggested some hints of the fable; but the traces of them in this Comedy are so little

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apparent, that if I did not thus acknowledge the sources from which I have drawn, I question if the ingenious author himself would be able to claim his own property.

Did I conceive that this play contained any passages unfavourable to liberty, more especially the liberty of the press, You, Sir, would be one of the last persons in the kingdom to whose protection I should venture to recommend it. The liberty of the press is a most invaluable privilege; yet that liberty, like every other species of liberty, may be abused; and while it remains (as it is to be hoped it ever will remain) unrestrained by law, the abuse of it is more peculiarly the object of Comedy, whose province it is, by wholesome and general satire, to correct those failings and enormities, of which the law takes no cognisance. Better were it that thousands and ten thousands of such insignificant individuals as myself should be maliciously slandered, than that sacred right of Englishmen should be violated or infringed: yet who will justify the scandalous personalities (politicks entirely out of the question) that disgrace our newspapers? It is not however sufficient, it seems, to endure them patiently, without a wish to interrupt their progress, but the gentlest retort is enough to set all Grub-street in an uproar; and the most good-humoured ridicule of these illustrious authors is an attack upon the liberty of the press:—a liberty
which

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which they are zealous to exercise in its fullest extent, without allowing any portion of it to their opponents; not considering that the chief benefit of the liberty of the press results from its being open to all, and affording a free examination of both sides of every question. The very liberty they take, however, they are not willing to give; like a scavenger I saw the other day in the street, who bespattered every passenger with the contents of his mud-cart, but sent a volley of curses after a lady of quality, who happened to splash him as she drove by in her chariot.

Having said thus much of my Comedy, in vindication of the freedom I have used in inscribing it to You, I will not trespass longer on your patience, than to repeat the satisfaction I feel in thus openly testifying my regard; and that I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Covent-Garden,
Feb. 7, 1774.

Your most devoted, faithful,

And affectionate humble servant,

GEORGE COLMAN.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. WOODWARD.

Enter as an Author with a Manuscript.

SEE here, good folks, how genius is abus'd!
A play of mine! the manager refus'd!
And why?—I knew the reason well enough—
Only to introduce his own damn'd stuff.
Oh! he's an arrogant, invidious elf,
Who hates all wit, and has no wit himself!
As to the plays on which he builds his fame,
Boasting your praise, *we all know whence they came.*
Crown him with ivy, least of Brentford kings!
For still, like ivy, round some oak he clings.
Plays you have damn'd, their authors yet unknown,
Trust me, good people, those were all his own.
If his lame Genius ever stood the test,
'Twas but a crutch'd noun adjective at best;
Or rather *expletive*, whose weak pretence
Occupies space, but adds not to the sense.
His Lady-Muse, tho' puling, wan, and thin,
With Green-Room caudle all in state lies in;
His brats so ricketty, 'tis still their curse
To be swath'd, swaddled, and put out to nurse;
Brought up on playhouse pap, they waule and cry,
Crawl on the stage, or in convulsions die.

His play to-night, like all he ever wrote,
Is pie-ball'd, piec'd, and patch'd, like Joseph's coat;
Made up of shreds from Plautus and Corneille,
Terence, Moliere, Voltaire, and Marmontel,
With rags from fifty others I might mention,
Which proves him dull and barren of invention:
But shall his nonsense hold the place of sense?
No, Damn him! Damn him, in your own defence!
Else on your mercy will the Dwarf presume,
Nor e'er give Giant Genius elbow-room.

Now,

Now, now, my friends, we've brought him to the stake;
 Bait him ! and then, perhaps, some sport he'll make.
 I've lin'd the house in front, above, below;
 Friends, like dried figs, stuck close in every row !
 Some wits in ambush, in the gallery sit;
 Some form a critick phalanx in the pit;
 Some scatter'd forces their shrill catcalls play,
 And strike the Tiny Scribler with dismay.
 On then my hearts ! charge ! fire ! your triumph's certain
 O'er his weak battery from behind the curtain !
 To-morrow's Chronicle your deeds shall boast,
 And loud *Te Deums* fill the Morning-Post.

Dramatis Personæ.

Fable,
 Golding,
 Beverley,
 Denier,
 Tropick,
 Check,
 Handy,
 Lord Riot,
 Sir Helter Skelter,
 Colonel Rakith,
 Scanty,
 Capias,
 Snap,
 Hazard,
 Cash,
 Servant,

Mrs. Golding,
 Lydia,
 Mrs Carlton,
 Mrs. Flounce,

Mr. BENSLEY.
 Mr. SHUTER.
 Mr. LEWIS.
 Mr. LEWES.
 Mr. WOODWARD.
 Mr. QUICK.
 Mr. DYER.
 Mr. DAVIS.
 Mr. FOX.
 Mr. OWENSON.
 Mr. GARDNER.
 Mr. KNIVETON.
 Mr. THOMPSON.
 Mr. CUSHING.
 Mr. HAMILTON.
 Mr. BATES.

Mrs. GREEN.
 Mrs. BULKLEY.
 Mrs. PITT.
 Mrs. HELME.

It would be ungrateful in the highest degree to close this preface, without acknowledging the very great obligations which the Author has to Mr. Garrick. Every attention, which, either as a manager, or as a man, he could give to the interest of the following play, he has bestowed with the most generous alacrity; but, universally admired as he is at present, his intrinsic value will not be known, till his loss is deplored; and the public have great reason to wish, that this may be a very distant event in the annals of the theatre. The Epilogue sufficiently marks the masterly hand from which it originated; so does the comic commencement of the Prologue, and the elegant writer of the graver part, is a character of distinguished eminence in the literary republic.

It has been remarked with great justice, that few new pieces were ever better performed than *The School for Wives*. Mr. King, that highly-deserving favourite of the town, was every thing the Author could possibly wish in General Savage. Mr. Reddish acquired a very considerable share of merited reputation in Belville. Mr. Moody is unequalled in his Irishman. Mr. Palmer, from his manner of supporting Leeson, was entitled to a much better part: And Mr. Weston in Torrington was admirable. Miss Younge, in Mrs. Belville, extorted applause from the coldest auditor. Her tender-

ness—her force—her pathos, were the true effusions of genius, and proved that she has no superior where the feelings are to be interested. With respect to Mrs. Abington, enough can never be said. The elegance, the vivacity, the critical nicety with which she went through Miss Walsingham, is only to be guessed at by those who are familiar with the performance of that exquisite actress. Her Epilogue was delivered with an animation not to be conceived, and manifested the strict propriety, with which she is called the first priestess of the Comic Muse in this country.

Jan. 1, 1774.

PRO-

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. KING.

NO coward be, who in this critick age,
 Dares set his foot upon the dang'rous stage;
 These boards, like Ice, your footing will betray,
 Who can tread sure upon a slipp'ry way?
 Yet some thro' five acts slide with wond'rous skill,
 Skim swift along, turn, stop, or wind at will!
 Some tumble, and get up; some rise no more;
 While cruel criticks watch them on the shore,
 And at each stumble make a bellish roar!
 A wise Philosopher hath truly noted,
 (His name I have forgot, tho' often quoted,)
 That fine-spun spirits from the slightest cause,
 Draw to themselves affliction, or applause:
 So fares it with our Bard.—Last week he meets
 Some bawlers, roaring up and down the streets,
 Lives, character, behaviour, parentage,
 Of some who lately left the mortal stage!
 His ears so caught the sound, and work'd his mind,
 He thought his own name floated in the wind;
 As thus—"Here is a faithful, true relation,
 "Of the birth, parentage, and education,
 "Last dying speech, confession, character,
 "Of the unhappy malefactorer,
 "And comic poet, Thomas Addle Brain!
 "Who suffer'd Monday last at Drury Lane;
 "All for the price of half-penny a-piece;"
 Still in his ears those horrid sounds encrease!
 Try'd and condemn'd, half-executed too,
 There stands the culprit; 'till reprov'd by you.

[going.

Enter

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Enter Miss YOUNGE.

Miss YOUNGE.

Pray give me leave—I've something now to say.

Mr. KING.

*Is't at the School for Wives, you're taught this way?
The School for Husbands teaches to obey.*

[Exit.

Miss YOUNGE.

*It is a shame, good Sirs, that brother King,
To joke and laughter should turn every thing.
Our frighted poet would have no denial,
But begs me to say something on his trial:
The School for Wives, as it to us belongs,
Should for our use be guarded with our tongues.
Ladies, prepare, arm well your brows and eyes,
From those your thunder, these your lightning flies.
Should storms be rising in the Pit—look down,
And still the waves thus, fair ones, with a frown:
Or should the Galleries for war declare;
Look up—your eyes will carry twice as far.*

** Our Bard, to noble triumphs points your way,
Bids you in moral principles be gay;
Something he'd alter in your education,
Something which hurting you, would hurt a nation.
Ingenuous natures wish you to reclaim?
By smiling virtue you'll insure your aim:
That gilds with bliss the matrimonial hours,
And blends her laurels with the sweetest flowers.*

*Ye married fair! deign to attend our school,
And without usurpation learn to rule:
Soon will he cease mean objects to pursue,
In conscience wretched till he lives to you;
Your charms will reformation's pain beguile,
And vice receive a stab from every smile.*

* The conclusion of the Prologue from this line is by another hand.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by ~~THE~~ ABINGTON.

CAN it be thought, ye wives! this scribbling fool,
Will draw you here, by calling you to School?
Does not he know, poor soul! to be directed
Is what you hate, and more to be corrected!
Long have these walls to public fame been known,
An ancient College to instruct the town!
We've Schools for Rakes, for Fathers, Lovers, Wives,
For naughty girls and boys, to mend their lives:
Where some to yawn, some round about to look,
Some to be seen, few come to mind their book:
Some with high wit and humour hither run,
To sweat the masters—and they call it fun.
Some modish sparks, true stoicks, and high bred,
Come, but ne'er know what's done, or sung, or said;
Should the whole herd of criticks round them roar,
And with one voice cry out, encore! encore! }
Or louder yet, off, off; no more! no more!
Should Pit, Box, Gall'ry with convulsions shake,
Still are they half asleep, nor t'other half awake:
O, ladies fair! are these fit men to wed?
Such husbands, half, had better be quite dead.
But, to return,—vain men, throughout the nation,
Boast, they alone, have College education:
Are not we qualify'd to take degrees? }
We've caps, and gowns, nay bands too, if you please,
Cornelly's, and Almack's, our Universities!
Young female students rise, if girls of parts,
From under graduates,—mistresses of arts!
The bashful spinsters, turn important spouses,
Strive to be masters, and the heads of houses;
Will any of you here, blest with a wife,
Dispute the fact,—you dare not for your life.

Pray

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*Pray tell me truly, criticks, and be free,
Do you this night prefer the Wife to me?
Shall Mrs. Belville give the ~~Play~~ a name?
What are her merits? a cōld, smiling dame,
While I, a salamander, liv'd in flame!
Press'd by three lovers!—'twas indeed provoking!
Ladies, upon my word, it was no joking.
Can you from mortal woman more require,
Than save her fingers, and yet play with fire?
The risks I run, the partial bard upbraids;
Wives won't be taught,—be it the School for Maids.*

}

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

**General SAVAGE,
BELVILLE,
TORRINGTON,
LEESON,
Captain SAVAGE,
CONNOLLY,
SPRUCE,
GHASTLY,
LEECH,
CROW,
WOLF,**

**Mr. KING.
Mr. REDDISH.
Mr. WESTON.
Mr. PALMER.
Mr. BRERETON,
Mr. MOODY.
Mr. BADDELEY.
Mr. W. PALMER.
Mr. BRANSBY.
Mr. WRIGHT.
Mr. ACKMAN.**

W O M E N.

**Miss WALSINGHAM,
Mrs. BELVILLE,
Lady RACHEL MILDEW,
Mrs. TEMHEST,
Miss LEESON,
MAID,**

**Mrs. ABINGTON.
Miss YOUNGE.
Mrs. HOPKINS.
Mrs. GREVILLE.
Miss JARRATT.
Mrs. MILLIDGE.**

T H E

T H E

MAN OF BUSINESS.

A C T I.

An Apartment in Golding's House.

Enter Fable and Mrs. Golding.

(She in a fancy dress, with a mask in her hand.)

Fable. **M** Adam, madam, I tell you he is a
coxcomb—an arrant coxcomb, Mrs.
Golding.

Mrs. Gold. He is a gentleman—thoroughly the
gentleman, Mr. Fable.

Fab. Yes, a modern gentleman—a fine gentleman—a race of puppies more pernicious to this country than a breed of wolves would have been.—A mongrel puppy too; on a wrong scent after pleasure; in chace of the fashion, but for ever at fault; with vanity in view, and ridicule for a whipper-in.

Mrs. Gold. Well, well, Mr. Fable, it does not signify talking. You know, you and I could never agree on this matter. I was always for my kinf-

B

man's

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man's keeping the very best company ; and, for my part, I see no great difference between him and his friends of quality—Nay, indeed, mongrel, as you are pleased to call him, Sir, the advantage is rather on his side : he has money without rank, and many of them have rank without money. If Beverley has great goings-out, he has great comings-in too ; while they keep fine houses, flaming equipages, and great tables out of nothing at all.

Fab. For which very reason, Mrs. Golding, he is not upon even terms with them. What has a man of business to do with men of pleasure ? Why is a young banker to live with young noblemen ?

Mrs. Gold. And why not, Mr. Fable ? Is not the business of the house carried on at the polite end of the town ? Does not he live in the very centre of persons of fashion ? And has not he constant dealings with them ?—Not shut up in Lombard-street—within the sound of Bow-bell, or in sight of the Monument—not cramming turtle and venison at the King's-Arms, or the London-Tavern—but ballotted into the Macaroni, and a member of the Sçavoir Vivre.

Fab. So much the worse—so much the worse, Mrs. Golding—his father, who was the firm of the house, established the credit of it by decency and sobriety : but dying while Beverley was very young, your husband, Mr. Golding, was received into the partnership as a man of experience, capable of carrying on the business to more advantage. He, you know, is now absent on necessary business abroad. In the mean time, I am left a kind of guardian to Beverley, and have the superintendence of his affairs—and what account shall I be likely to give of them, when instead of making money after the example of his father, he is intent on nothing but spending it ?
Horses at New-market

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market, hounds at Bagshot, a villa, a mistress, play, and a round of dissipation among hair-brain'd spendthrifts, wasting their constitutions before they arrive at maturity, spending their fortunes before they come to them, granting annuities to eat up their estates, or living upon the sale of post obits and reversions!—There, madam, there's a picture of a genteel young banker at the west-end of the town for you; drawn from the life, and coloured after nature; how do you like it, madam?

Mrs. Gold. A frightful caricature, Mr. Fable! your descriptions are just the reverse of that sweet flower of a man, the auctioneer over the way. His style is enchanting and delicate, elegant as the *or moulu*, or Derbyshire petrifications, he sets to sale, and soft as the pencil of Guido, Raphael, or Correggio—Your pictures may be taken from nature; but they are dark!—dark as the landscapes of Poussin, and wild, and horrible as the views of Salvator Rosa.

Fab. Madam, madam, it is these affected airs, madam, that pervert your understanding, and make you blind to the danger of your kinsman.—He is in imminent danger of ruin, madam, which will fall upon him, if something is not speedily done to prevent it.

Mrs. Gold. And what would you have me do, Mr. Fable? All I say is, that good company is a very good thing, and genteel connexions can never do my kinsman any mischief; and if I had been mistress, I never would have rested till I had got him into parliament.

Fab. Into parliament!—into jail, madam. Is not he at expence enough—

Mrs. Gold. Expence! Lord, lord! This is a point of œconomy, sir. Why he would save above double the charge of bringing him into the house

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by the mere postage of letters.—Sir Geoffry Kilderkin got himself elected for no other purpose.—My kinsman too would frank himself whole again.—And then I am sure he would make an admirable figure in a debate.—Oh, how it would have delighted me to have sat among the ladies in the gallery of the house—to have seen him upon his feet, his whole person hanging over his right leg, his right arm swinging to and fro like a pendulum, and his tongue running down like a larum!

Fab. So, so! you, I fear, are too far gone for wholesome counsel. Beverley, I hope is not quite incorrigible, and some good may be done upon him. Good morrow to you, madam! I have business; good day, madam.

Mrs. Gold. Good night, if you please, sir. You may be just up, but I have not been to bed yet, being (as you see) but just come from the Pantheon. The masquerade began to grow thin; but my kinsman, who was there, is not come home yet, and may not return for some time perhaps—so, once more, good night, good Mr. Fable! I'll endeavour to recruit my spirits from the fatigue of the pleasures of the night, and leave you to the business of the day. Your servant, sir. [Exit.

Fable alone.

Your servant, madam!—A weak woman, incapable indeed of swaying the mind of Beverley by her advice, but still serving to countenance his follies by her example. But now to the business of the day, as she says!—A serious day it will appear to the young gentleman, I fancy—But it is high time to make him serious—I'll just allow him a short interval to sleep off his masquerade, and then

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then wake him from his dream of folly to a sense of his true situation.

Enter Check.

Fab. Good morrow, Check!

Check. Good morrow to your honour!—The shop is just opened and sprinkled. I am going to the compting-house.

Fab. That's right, Check. Regularity and punctuality are the life of business.

Check. The life and soul, sir. I have always found them so—always exact myself I can answer—always precise to a second—and as true to my time as the men that strike the quarters at St. Dunstan's. Ha! ha!

Fab. You're merry, Check!

Check. Ah! I wish I had cause, sir. Another great house in this city stopt payment yesterday, and a large sum subscribed to prop the credit of another. Sad times, Mr. Fable!

Fab. Sad times! sad men, honest Check. Men make the times.

Check. Very true, very true, sir. Ah, one need not go far from home to know that, sir. In poor old Mr. Beverley's time, when we carried on business in Threadneedle-street, those were days, Mr. Fable! I wish we were on the other side of Temple-bar, again!

Fab. No, no; you are right just where you are, friend. The two sides of Temple-bar have changed hands, Check. The gay, smart, airy sparks of the west-end of the town, have all taken to business, and are turned sheriffs and aldermen; and the merchants, bankers, and tradesmen, are your principal persons of pleasure now a days.

Check. Ah, I am afraid so. Here's a house, forsooth! my old lady always entertaining company

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pany at home, and my young master always abroad; night turned into day, and day turned into night! It was not so in my old master's time. Never out of the regular channel; sure and moderate profit; quiet, sober living; a plain joint and a pudding on week-days, and, perhaps, two joints and two puddings on a Sunday!

Fab. Nay, nay, don't be melancholy, Check. You may live to see two puddings on table again, perhaps.

Check. We have no hopes but in you, Mr. Fable; no hope but in you, sir! Every thing would go to wreck and ruin, if it was not for you, sir.

Fab. Come, come; cheer up, honest Check! your young master will take up shortly. He has a good heart, and a good understanding.

Check. I wish he would make less use of his heart, and more of his understanding, sir. He is as generous as a prince, and he thinks all his acquaintance as honest and generous as himself. Let him mind his friend, Mr. Denier, sir. There's a young man for you! merry and wise, I warrant him! He knows that a shilling is a serious thing; that a penny saved is a penny got; and two and two make four, sir.

Fab. Beverley will find it out at last, Check — Have you prepared the books and papers as I directed you?

Check. I have, sir.

Fab. Very well. Let them be ready for inspection this very morning; and tell Mr. Beverley I am gone to the Bank; but desire he would not be out of the way at my return, as I have something of consequence to say to him. Good morrow, Check!

Check. Good morrow to your honour! I shall be sure to let Mr. Beverley know, sir.

[*Exit. Fable.*
Oh,

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Oh, here come his *gentleman*, as they call him. I wish there was not such a gentleman within the bills of mortality.

Enter Handy.

Good morrow to you, Mr. Handy! Good morrow!

Handy. What! my old Rule of Three! are you there? good morrow to you!

Check. Mr. Beverley is not up yet, I suppose.

Handy. Then you suppose wrong, old Thread-needle! He is up, I assure you.

Check. Indeed! why he is more early than ordinary, Mr. Handy.

Handy. Much later than ordinary, master Check. He has not been to bed yet.

Check. Mercy on me! past eight in the morning, and not gone to bed yet?

Handy. No, he's not come home from the masquerade.

Check. The masquerade! Oh, now you have accounted for it.

Handy. Yes, I had some thoughts of being at the Pantheon myself, but—

Check. What! at the six-penny Pantheon at Islington, Mr. Handy.

Handy. Six-penny Pantheon! S'death what d'ye mean, fir? do you take me for a little shop-keeping mechanic, or one of your dapper city clerks, that draws his pen from under his ear in the evening, to go and drink tea at Bagnigge Wells or Dobney's Bowling Green? No, fir; let me tell you I frequent no diversions but those of persons of quality. Plays now and then, operas twice a week, and masquerades whenever there are any.—A lady of my particular acquaintance—of the first fashion I assure you, old gentleman,—had provided me a ticket, and a domino, with a smart hat and feather,

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ther, and diamond button and loop to it.—But, as the devil would have it, my lord du—zouns, what was I saying?—Her husband, I say, happening to come in at an unfortunate moment, saw the dress lying in her apartment. My lady—a devilish clever woman upon my soul—turned it off with a laugh, and told him she had provided them on purpose for him, in order to surprise him with a piece of conjugal gallantry. So away they went to the Pantheon together, and I was obliged to amuse myself with another woman of quality who kept house all the evening, to console myself for my disappointment.

Check. You imagine I have a large portion of faith, I believe, Mr. Handy.

Handy. Faith!—Why have I offered to borrow any money of you, you old multiplication-table? Eh!

Check. You have not taken that liberty with me because you knew I would lend you none: but you are rather too familiar with your betters methinks.

Handy. They are familiar with us, and encourage familiarities on our side.—Nay, if you would follow my advice, I would engage to make a fortune even for you, old Methusalem!

Check. For me, Mr. Handy!

Handy. Ay, for you, old boy! What do you think now of making love to Mrs. Golding? Her husband's abroad, you know. Intrigues are the mode, and she loves to be in the fashion.—Devil take me, if I don't think she and you would make an excellent *tête-a-tête*—Shalum and Hilpa! Eh, my old antediluvian.

Check. A truce with your wit, good Mr. Handy; and please to let our master know that Mr. Fable desires to see him on some particular business as soon

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soon as he is stirring,—which, perhaps, may be about dinner-time.

Handy. What! Do you pretend to joke too? Pounds, shillings, and Pence—you had best stick to that, old gentleman.

Check. They won't stick to you long, I am afraid, young gentleman. Ha, ha!

Handy. Again! You are trying to copy after old master Fable, I warrant you.—A sly, dry, queer old buck, that Mr. Fable! He don't much approve of our proceedings, I believe. The people call my master the Macaroni Banker, he says. (*Laugh beard*)—Gadso! yonder my master comes, faith—and along with him his bosom friend, Mr Denier—a snake in his bosom too, if I am not mistaken. I never could endure that shrewd spark since I heard him upon the chapter of vails—which he never gives to other people's servants; but, for fear of raising the wages at home, suffers them to be taken by his own. A young curmudgeon! worse than a liquorish old dotard, if possible.—What say you, Grandfire?—(*Laugh again*)—But, hush! they are here.—Now you may deliver your errand to him yourself, old gentleman.

(*Check and Handy retire a little.*)

Enter Beverley and Denier. (*Beverley in a domino; Denier also in a masquerade dress.*)

Bev. Support a character at a masquerade! Absurd and ridiculous!—and a vulgar idea too, that never entered the head of a gentleman.

Denier. Oh, my habit gave me no trouble of that sort—yet I did not wear it from choice, but from convenience. One of the managers of Covent-Garden theatre—for there are about five and forty of them, you know—lent me the dress—and I don't see why I should be expected to support a

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character in it any more than those who usually wear it.—Eh, Beverley?

Bev. No, to be sure. They who say the softest things, and succeed most with the women, enter into the spirit and genius of the place the most happily. Gallantry and intrigue, not wit and humour, are the objects of a masquerade.

Denier. I beg your pardon, Beverley. I know more than one or two professed jokers, that rehearse their parts for a fortnight before-hand, and write down all the good things they shall say; but, as ill luck will have it, for want of courage and opportunity, never utter one of them; and yet, resolving they shall not be lost to the world, send them, ready cut and dry, to the news-papers, as having been their extempore sallies and masquerade pleasantries.

Bev. Oh, I know the little haberdashers of small wit; I know them, Denier, and thank you for your description of them.—But who the deuce was that very elegant-looking woman that lord Robert Sprightly stuck so close to for most part of the evening? I have a strong notion it was lady Sarah Brilliant—very like her figure; or Harriot Freelove—but her—she's common, you know—her he would not have followed so warmly.—Oh, Check, are you there?—Handy too? (*Check and Handy come forward*) Have you set my night-things in my bed-chamber?

Handy. They are all ready, sir.

Bev. Did you present sir John Squanderfield's notes for acceptance, Check?

Check. I did, sir.

Bev. Any cards, Handy?—And were they good bills, Check?

Handy. The cards, tickets, and messages lie on your dressing-table, sir.

Bev.

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Bev. Very well.—And were fir John's notes duly accepted, Check?

Check. They ought to have been duly *protested*, fir.—Not good bills—not worth a farthing, fir. I have not given him credit for them.

Bev. Well, let him have due notice, d'ye hear, Check?—And do you call at the *Scavoir*, and let them know that I shall dine there to-day, d'ye hear, Handy?—And do you come to me with the state of fir John's account, as soon as I am up, d'ye hear, Check?

Check. The account is ready, fir; but Mr. Fable desires to speak with you as soon as you are up, fir. He is gone into the city, but will return before you are stirring, and has particular business.

Bev. I shall be ready to attend him.—Let me be called about one, d'ye hear, Handy?—I have nothing further to say to you at present, Check.

Check. Mighty well, fir.

Bev. Handy, wait in my chamber.

Handy. I shall, fir.

[*Exeunt Check and Handy severally.*]

Manent Beverley and Denier.

Bev. You'll dine with us at the *Scavoir*, Denier?

Denier. That's impossible. Lady Quaver, who subscribes to the opera, has lent her box to Mrs. Carlton and Lydia this evening, and I have promised to attend them; so we must make a short early dinner at home. You will hardly rise from table before the *finale*.

Bev. Time enough to see the Heinel walk over the course, perhaps: but the places of public diversion do keep most disorderly hours to be sure. As to the play-houses, I scarce ever attempt to peep into them. There is no getting a mouthful of tragedy or comedy without baulking one's appetite

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for every thing else. But Lydia is fond of play^s too ; and the little prude is so eager and punctual, she is as sure to be at the drawing up of the curtain as if she went to keep places.

Denier. Come, come, after all, you are very partial to my ward, Beverley. She is severe upon your gaiety, and you rally her prudery. You both think it worth while to find fault with each other ; and that's a dreadful symptom, Beverley.

Bev. No, no ; not so far gone as that neither. —The girl has some good natural qualities ; but she has not mixed with the world enough. —She is like one of our English coaches—made of good stuff, and not ill fashion'd—but wants the high Paris varnish, Denier.

Denier. I have a good mind to acquaint her with your comparison —She'll varnish you till you appear like lord Rusty's pictures—not much the better for it. —But, apropos to your simile,—after your coach has set you down to dinner in St. James's Street, can you send it to carry us to the opera?

Bev. To be sure. They are not put up yet. I'll give orders about it immediately.

Denier. Stay ! Suppose it takes me home then ; and I'll tell them your direction.—I shall hardly get a chair at this time in the morning.

Bev. Be it so. Good night to you.—But, Denier !

Denier. Well.

Bev. There is to be another masquerade next week, at the Haymarket. Will you go ?

Denier. No—hang it ! next week is too soon for it.—So much of it makes it grow nauseous.

Bev. It will be a genteel thing.

Denier. A genteel masquerade !—Oh, that's the devil, Beverley. The company at a masquerade should be almost as various as the characters they

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represent.—Countesses and sempstresses, lords, aldermen, blacklegs, and Oxonians.—Make your masquerade too genteel, and it must be very dull, Beverley.

Bev. All the fine women in town will be there. It is to be given by the club at Arthur's. I can supply you with tickets.

Denier. Can you?—Well then—come, for once I will go with you.

Bev. Now, if you could prevail on Lydia to go too——

Denier. No; she won't take the Paris varnish, Beverley.

Bev. I am sorry for it. Then there's no hopes of her.

Denier. Poor Beverley! Adieu!

Bev. Poor Lydia, I say. I'll go to bed and dream of her reformation. Good night to you.

[Exeunt severally.]

A C T



A C T II.

Beverley's dressing room. A writing desk and dressing-table, chairs, &c.

Bell rings two or three times violently; at length enter Handy in a morning dress, rubbing his eyes.

Handy. **R**ING, ring, ring! The devil's in Mr. Beverley to day, I think. He desires to be waked about one or two; and is ready to pull the bells out of the pullies between eleven and twelve. (*Rings.*) Again! I'll be with you in a moment, sir.—(*Yawns*)—If he had been at deep play last night, I should have thought his losses had disturbed him—or if he had been drinking, that his rest was spoil'd with sickness and head ache.—But to come home sober, and in good humour, and then drag one out of bed like a school-boy or an apprentice—(*Rings again*) Well, well, I am coming—Stay till I can get to you, sir. (*Going.*) Not he, faith—here he is—walking in his sleep for aught I know—for I am sure, I am hardly awake yet, (*Yawning.*)

Enter Beverley.

Bev. Oh, you are here, I see. I thought you were dead, Handy.

Handy. Dead asleep, sir. I had hardly got warm in bed, in my first doze, sir.

(*Yawning.*)

Bev.

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Bev. Come, come, my breakfast. I have no time for dozing and dreaming. To keep my engagements at night, I must dispatch a good deal of business in the morning. (*Sits.*) Reach me that bundle of papers. (*Handy brings them from the desk.*) I must answer these letters—Now chocolate, Handy; chocolate immediately.

Handy (aside.) Whew! [*Exit yawning.*]

Bev. (untying the bundle.) Say what they will of your dull fellows and drudges, men of spirit are your only persons of dispatch—diligent in their business for the sake of getting rid of it—not working slowly, grub, grub, like a mole, but straining to the goal like a racer.—Let me see, what have we here? (*looking at one of the letters.*) Oh, a letter from Mr. Golding's old Quaker friend and correspondent Ephraim Quiet of Bristol.

Re-enter Handy.

Handy. The chocolate, sir.

Bev. Very well—Set it down, Handy—and tell Check to come to me with the account I spoke to him about, when I came home last night.

Handy. He's here already, sir, and Mr. Fable too.

Enter Fable, attended by Check, with books and papers.

Bev. (rising) Mr. Fable, your very humble servant.

Fable. Oh, your servant, your servant.—Are you sure you have all the books and papers with you, Check?

Check. Very sure, sir.

Fable. And have you the instrument from my attorney?

Check. It is here, sir.

Fab'e.

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Fable. And the balances of the several accounts are all right and exact?

Check. To the sixteenth of a farthing, sir; I have proved them again and again, sir.

Fable. Very well. Lay them on the table then. I shall be with you presently in the compting-house.

Check. You will be sure to find me there, sir.

[Lays down books, &c. and exit.

Fable. And now indulge me with a word or two in private, Mr. Beverley.

Bev. Pray be seated, sir.—Handy, wait in the antichamber.

Handy. I shall, sir.

[Exit.

Manent Fable and Beverley, sitting.

Fable (after a short pause). I am afraid, I have broken in upon you rather abruptly, Mr. Beverley.

Bev. Not at all, sir.

Fable. My business is pressing, and I must be as abrupt in disclosing it.

Bev. Pray, what is it, sir?

Fable. I should wish to administer comfort, rather than to distress or surprise you; but there is no time for delicacies or room for palliation.

Bev. You amaze me! What do you mean, sir?

Fable. Don't be too much alarmed neither; don't let it totally discourage you. You are young, you know——

Bev. Relieve me from suspense, I beseech you, sir.

Fable. Nay, I can't say it is downright ruin neither.

Bev. Ruin, Mr. Fable!

Fable. No; not absolutely. Your credit and character may be both a little shaken by it at first, indeed; but, with industry, thank heaven, you will

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will have time and opportunity to re-establish them.

Bev. You keep me on the rack, let me comprehend you. Be plain, sir!

Fab. In a word then—what do you think of the failure of the house?

Bev. Sir!

Fab. Stopping payment?

Bev. Impossible!

Fab. Ten days ago I was of your opinion.—But those papers, Mr. Beverley, among which are copies of the last letters from Mr. Golding, will convince you that the danger is imminent.

Bev. Why—Why was I not more early apprised of this, Mr. Fable?

Fab. You have a great deal on your hands, you know; and I did not care to interrupt your amusements, or damp your vivacity, till I had examined and settled the state of your affairs. I was in hopes, indeed, matters had not been so desperate.—But one misfortune is always accompanied by another, and another followed by more.—The insurance not being done on the *Speedwell* and *Thetis*, owing to the miscarriage of Mr. Golding's letters from Bengal, the wreck of both those Indiamen, as well as Mr. Golding's other losses in India; the failure of the houses at Amsterdam; the late run upon our own; and the bills we have accepted being so soon payable—are unlucky circumstances, all concurring to perplex and embarrass us.

Bev. And what—what's to be done then, Mr. Fable?

Fab. Oh, don't be too uneasy! the shock is rather violent and sudden, to be sure; but I hope to extricate you with honour and reputation.

Bev. You revive me—By what means, sir?

D

Fab.

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Fab. When you have look'd into the vouchers which Check has left with you, you will see the necessity of executing this instrument, constituting me your sole trustee and creditor; I having undertaken to satisfy every other claim and demand upon the house.—All that concerns me is, that in order to come handsomely through this business, and to appear in earnest to the world, we must exact some co-operation on your part, some little sacrifices from you, Mr. Beverly.

Bev. Sacrifices from me! what sacrifices, Mr. Fable?

Fab. Not that I think they will affect you much neither. I was happy, to be sure, to see you keeping the very best company, making a figure on the turf, regularly attending the hunt, and entertaining handsomely both here, and at Wimbledon.—But people in business are liable to these accidents—and pleasure, you know, must give way when pressing exigencies require it. Put your horses to sale, part with your hounds, sell your villa—and as a narrower plan of living, a system of œconomy, will render all the plate and present furniture unnecessary, I think it will be adviseable to lett this house too. A smaller will serve to carry on the business.

Bev. Sell my horses and hounds! part with my houses! dispose of my plate, Mr. Fable! surely this is being rather too precipitate. It should be very maturely considered, whether we cannot smother these evils, without letting them burst into a flame immediately.

Fab. That has been thoroughly considered, depend upon't—nay, I have already convened the capital creditors, and convinced them of the certainty of their demands being satisfied, on the plan I have proposed to you. They are persuaded that the house will ultimately prove good and sufficient,

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ficient, and have engaged to support it. Some few indeed seemed to doubt your concurrence and perseverance; but I (who think I know you better) undertook to answer for both. The truth is, you have no alternative.—The affair is publick by this time, and the eyes of the whole world are upon you—But courage, Beverley! you have youth, as I told you, and honour, and abilities. They are now put to the test, and I have no fear of your conduct. When you have finished your breakfast, run your eye over the account, read Mr. Golding's last letters, examine the deed of trust, and consider what I have said to you. Your servant! Good day to you! Your servant!

[*Exit.*]

Beverley alone.

What is all this?—Vessels uninsured! Failure of correspondents! Letters from Mr. Golding! Losses in India!—Sure our situation cannot be so bad as he has represented it.—Let me look into these writings! Let me examine this account!—Handy!—(*fitting*) The book of fate could scarcely be more dreadful to me than this mass of papers.

Enter Handy.

Handy. Sir!

Bev. What do you do here, rascal! I am busy. How dare you interrupt me?

Handy. I thought you had called, sir.

Bev. Get out of the room, firrah, or I'll—

Handy. I beg your pardon, sir. I am gone, sir—What the deuce is the matter with him this morning?

[*Exit.*]

Beverley alone.

What an unfeeling animal is a mere person of business! Mr. Fable has stunned me: I am thunder-struck: and yet there was a serenity in his manner,

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a malicious calm in his countenance, that cut me to the soul—I am distracted—I can neither read, nor write, nor think.—Handy! Where are you, rascal? (*Enter Handy*) Why did not you take these things away, as I ordered you?

Handy. I thought you had not done breakfast, sir.—A card from sir Charles Easy, sir. [*giving it.*

Bev. Give me no cards, rascal!

[*throwing it away.*

Handy. The man waits for an answer, sir.

Bev. I can send no answer. I'm ill, I'm busy, I'm——I'll send an answer by and by.—I'll send an answer by and by.

Handy. Very well. I'll let him know, sir.

[*Exit.*

Beverley alone.

Let me see! let me collect my thoughts a little! Suppose I advise with Denier! suppose—

Enter Handy.

Handy. A letter, sir!—requires no answer they say.

[*Exit.*

Beverley alone.

From Lucy! I know her hand. (*looking at the superscription*) I must look into it; but what poor spirits have I at present to peruse letters of gaiety! Her tenderness too— (*opens and reads*) What's this?

“ Sir Harry Flutter has heard of your misfortunes, and convinced me that I shou'd be a burden to you. He has offered to be my friend,
“ so adieu, Beverley!

“ Your's Lucy.”

Confusion!—the business is publick indeed then—
But so soon to desert me!—To be the cast lover
of

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of a cast mistress to half the town? But let her go! let her go! an ungrateful jade! My friends will execrate her. All my numerous acquaintance will despise her. She'll be the scoff, the scorn of—

Enter Lord Riot, Sir Helter Skelter, Col. Rakish, and Scanty.

Lord Riot. Beverley!—why what the devil is all this? the whole town is talking of you. Is there any truth in this story? You are undone, they say.

Bev. No: not undone, my lord!

Col. Rak. The St. James's Coffee-house is full of it, and Betty talks of nothing else.

Bev. Damnation!

Sir Helt. I was offered ten to one at the Cocoa-Tree that you and all your partners would be in the Gazette next Saturday. Shall I take the odds, Beverley?

Bev. The house has not stopt payment, sir!—Confusion!

Scanty. No, no, not so bad as that—a little crash, indeed—but I said the house would not stop payment. I was always your friend, Mr. Beverley.

Bev. I am obliged to you, sir.—Vexation!

Col. Rak. They say, old Golding has made a sad hand of it in India. An old blockhead! What did he meddle for? why you could have ruined yourself fast enough without his assistance. —Poor little Lucy too! she'll be on the *pavée* again. I have half a mind to take compassion on her myself.—But she's so cursed fond of Beverley, there would be no dependence on her.

Lord Riot. Well, but Beverley! Your place at Wimbledon is to be put up at auction, it seems. —A going, a going, a going!—So we are to have no dinner there next Sunday, I suppose.

Bev. No, no, no, no,—my lord. Distraction!

Sir Helt.

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Sir Helt. As you'll part with that set of bay ponies, and the Phaeton, I suppose, I wish you'd give me the refusal. You should think of your friends, Beverley.

Bev. Another time! another time, sir.

Lord Riot. Ay, I know we interrupt him. He is in the midst of all his writings and accounts, you see. I shall be glad to see you, when you have leisure. Good day to you, Beverley!

Sir Helt. }
Col. Rak. } Adieu! adieu, Beverley!

[*Exeunt Lord Riot, Sir Helt. and Col. Rak.*

Manent Scanty and Beverley.

Scanty. See what a set of washy-minded fellows these are now!—It is well you are rid of them. Did not I always warn you to be cautious of your company?

Bev. I thank you for your advice, but it distresses me at present, sir.

Scanty. Well, well, I'll say no more then—I am glad to find matters not so bad as they have been reported. You'll keep your head above water yet, I hope.—I just staid to mention the affair of the twenty pounds you promised me the last time I saw you.

Bev. This is not a time for affairs of that sort, sir.

Scanty. Well, well—I would not have mentioned it—but that last match at billiards was not quite settled, you know.

Bev. There, sir—there's a bank-note of the value.—Now leave me, I beseech you, sir.

Scanty. Well, well,—I see you are busy, and I will leave you—but for the future remember my counsel—stick to my advice—always be cautious in the choice of your company, Beverley! [*Exit.*

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Beverley alone.

So, so! so! so!—This is *the world*, as they call it—A pack of hollow friends, and despicable acquaintance! How weak, have I been, to give my heart to these wretches, who have souls incapable of mutual attachment!—Callous to distress, and dead to the feelings of humanity!—How I long to see Denier! He is a true friend—frugal without avarice, and chearful without dissipation. He would both advise and assist me.—He would presently—

Enter Denier.

Ha, Denier! I was this moment wishing for you. You have heard, I suppose—

Den. I have; I have, Beverley; and ran to you immediately—though I had particular business in the city too this morning—but a friend has promised to transact it for me. How are you, Beverley?

Bev. What a blow, my friend! from whom had you the first news of it?

Den. From Mr. Fable himself. He came to me on my own affairs, as well as about a large remittance which he has just received on account of Lydia,

Bev. Lydia!—Oh Denier!—Lydia! (*sighing*)—a large remittance did you say?

Den. Yes, from her friends in India, who consigned her to our family. A very considerable remittance, indeed—But Mr. Fable is made trustee, I find—They treat her as the court of Chancery does a lunatick. We are committees of her person, and Mr. Fable committee of the estate.

Bev. Excuse me, Denier; but the very shadow of mirth is at present unseasonable. I am glad, however, that Lydia is likely to be so amply provided for. (*Sighing.*)

Den.

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Den. So am I: and I am glad too that you have always professed so total an indifference about her; as a disappointment from any reverse of fortune, in case you had fixed your affections on her, would have been an additional mortification.—But Beverley!

Bev. My friend!

Den. You are convinced, I believe, of the truth of my regard for you.

Bev. I never doubted it.

Den. That I have the most affectionate friendship for you.

Bev. I am sure of it.

Den. You don't imagine me capable of proposing any thing that might be disagreeable to you?

Bev. The last man on earth I should suspect of it.

Den. I think too, on your part, Beverley, that you would not, from a mere point of delicacy, oppose or repine at my happiness, if it did not interfere with your own.

Bev. No—to be sure I should not.—But what is all this? Explain.

Den. You must know then, Beverley, that I began very early to be captivated with Lydia.

Bev. Eh!

Den. But fancying you entertained a partiality for her, I smothered my inclination out of friendship for you. But as you meant only superficial gallantry, I now wish to make her serious proposals.

Bev. Proposals to Lydia?

Den. Yes, proposals of marriage; and indeed it seems almost to have been the wish of her friends to bring about such an alliance by placing her in our family.

Bev. That's true—that did not occur to me at first, I confess—the too, I suppose, has given you
some

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some hopes.—I wish you happy—I wish you—I wish you a great deal of happiness, Mr. Denier. (*disordered.*)

Den. Thank you, my dear friend, thank you! —But come, come, Beverley! Mr. Fable's news has quite disheartened you. We must not see you too much cast down, neither. This is but a cloud. You will break out again with double splendor presently.—Can I be of any service to you? Shall I look into your papers—and examine your accounts?

Bev. Not at present, I am obliged to you—not at present, Mr. Denier.

Den. Oh, I had forgot. All my money is locked up: but if you should want a purchaser for the Beverley estate, on that occasion, I dare say, my friends would supply me. You may always command me, you know.

Bev. I know it. I am obliged to you.

Den. Let me see! (*looking at his watch*) it is not so late as I thought it was—that Solomon is a puzzling, stupid, old fellow—I had better go up to the Alley, and look after the business myself, I believe—unless I could be of any use to you by staying here, Beverley.

Bev. Not in the least. I beg I mayn't hinder you.

Den. Good day to you then! I can turn an eighth I dare say this morning. Good day, Beverley! [*Exit.*]

Beverley alone.

Now am I completely miserable. Fool, idiot, that I have been! to trifle with a delicate female heart—to trifle with my own!—Oh, Lydia! I am now, for the first time, thoroughly sensible of

E

my

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my affection for you; and now to discover it, only to add to my wretchedness! Distraction!—Denier too seems to wear a different aspect—at least my imagination, jaundiced by my misfortunes, paints him of another colour.—But Lydia! after the impertinence of my former behaviour, how despicable must I appear to her! What a humiliating distance has fortune now thrown between us! Mrs. Golding here! New torture! Ha! Lydia with her! Oh my heart! How shall I look up to her!

Enter Mrs. Golding (in a morning dishabille.)

Mrs. Gold. Nay, come in, child! pray come in! I must speak to poor Beverley. Come in Miss Lydia, I beg of you [*Beverley runs to the door and introduces Lydia*—Ay, take care of her, kinsman! She is a delicate soul, and as much shocked as if she were your sister.—But for heaven's sake, child, what is this rigmarole story that Mr. Fable has distracted us about?

Bev. A very serious affair indeed, madam.

Mrs. Gold. Serious! He's always serious, I think—preaching, preaching, for ever preaching: like lady Tott'nam, that builds all the Methodist chapels.—But it's a strange thing Mr. Golding should never write me word of all this business.—

Bev. I have not yet examined the proofs, but dare say, Mr. Fable has just grounds for his proceedings.

Mrs. Gold. Lord, lord! how this breaks into all my arrangements! the glass over my dressing-room chimney-piece is stuck round with cards, one upon another—I am promised the whole town over for these three months. But it's no matter—they'll be the death of me—so it don't signify.

[throws herself into a chair.

Bev.

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Bev. We must look forward, madam. The prospect is a little gloomy at present, but promises to clear again. No endeavours shall be wanting on my part.

Mrs. Gold. No, I dare say. You were always a good creature—a great favourite of mine you know always—But I can't tell what possessed them to make you a man of business. If they had been ruled by me, they would have put you into the guards. You would have made a sweet figure in a regimental: would not he, Lydia? And then you'd have had as little to do as Colonel Parade or Captain Gilliflower. But I'll look into the red book—the only book worth looking into—and see if we can't use our interest to get you some little snug sinecure—a commissioner of trade, perhaps, or a lord of the admiralty.

Bev. I begin to feel we have no dependence but on ourselves, madam.

Mrs. Gold. Well, well—may be not, kinsman—and yet we have a very genteel set of acquaintance.—But, mercy on me, what a figure do I make, if any body should call, in this muslin shade, and queen's night-cap! Lydia, my dear! let me leave you here a minute or two while I tuffle on my things—and then come to me in my dressing-room. Your conversation is better than hartshorn or lavender. Poor Beverley here looks as dismal as young lady Grizzle on her marriage with old sir Solomon. [Exit.

Manent Beverley and Lydia.

(They remain some time silent.)

Bev. Excuse me, madam, if I venture to express how deeply I am sensible of your appearing to be affected by my misfortunes: and yet I cannot but confess that I feel your compassion almost

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as painfully as a reproach—for I am conscious I have not deserved it.

Lyd. Touched as I am with the reverse of your situation, Mr. Beverley, I will not dissemble to you that I am pleased with the change in your behaviour.

Bev. Still, still, this very approbation serves to reproach me with the impropriety of my late conduct towards you. I feel it. I request your forgiveness of it; and should be happy to pass the rest of my life in endeavouring to atone it.

Lyd. Make no apologies to me, Mr. Beverley; I have no right to expect them, nor has your conduct rendered them necessary: most young gentlemen who pique themselves on their knowledge of the world, act much in the same manner as you behaved to me.

Bev. It is too true; but it is not the swarm of coxcombs that renders them less impertinent or troublesome. I ought not to have adopted their contemptuous airs, without being master also of their tame insensibility; yet I had youth to plead in excuse for my vanities; and I flatter myself, that time and reflection—and another motive that distracts me when I think of it—might have rendered me an object less unworthy your compassion. Calamity has torn the veil from my eyes, and I now see but too plainly, not only your excellence, but my own imperfections.

Lyd. Calamity is a severe master, yet amendment can scarce be purchased too dearly: and as your errors have been venial, your distress may be but transient; nay, may, perhaps, at last be the means of your happiness.

Bev. Impossible! Impossible! However I may be restored to affluence, I can never, never taste of happiness. I have thrown away—perhaps wantonly too—I have thrown away the jewel that
should

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should have been the pride and blessing of my life. —Oh, Lydia! the feelings of worldly distress are nothing to the agonies of a despairing affection. My situation extorts from me what I have hitherto endeavoured to conceal even from myself. I love you—I feel I long have loved you—though wretch and fool enough to be almost ashamed of a passion in which I ought to have gloried. I am now punished for it—heaven knows, severely punished—perhaps too severely—by losing the very hopes of ever obtaining you.

Lyd. Do not run from one dangerous extreme to another, Mr. Beverley; but guard against despondency, as well as vanity and presumption. I see you are much agitated, much dejected; and what it would, perhaps, have been dangerous and unpardonable to have owned to you but yesterday, to-day I shall not scruple to declare. Hurried away, as you were, by a torrent of fashionable vanities, and the poor ambition of keeping high company, I thought I could discern in your mind and disposition no mean understanding, nor ungenerous principles—too good for the associates you had selected, and too susceptible not to be in danger from such society. It is no wonder, therefore, if I felt any growing partiality for you, that I endeavoured to restrain it.

Bev. To restrain it! Say rather to extinguish it. Oh, I now perceive all my wretchedness.—But to be supplanted by my bosom-friend! by Denier!

Lyd. I am at a loss to comprehend you.

Bev. He confessed to me his passion for you but this very morning—not an hour ago he declared to me his intention of making you serious proposals.

Lyd. Such proposals would be sure of being rejected—rejected with the utmost indignation.

Bev.

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Bev. What do I hear? May I still hope then? And are you resolved not to listen to his addresses?

Lyd. I am too well acquainted with his character. His manners, indeed, are lively, and his worldly turn enables him to work himself into the friendship of others; especially, those like yourself, Mr. Beverley—of an undesigning open-hearted character; in order to avail himself of their foibles, promote his interest, and gratify his penury. Rely not too securely on the warmth of his professions! steady to no point but his interest, you will find him shifting in his conduct according to the revolutions in your fortune. He seemed at first desirous to unite me to you; but now, hearing, I suppose, of the alteration in your circumstances, and the late remittances in my favour, it is perfectly agreeable to his sentiments, to endeavour to supplant you. As yet, however, he has made me no overtures.

Bev. So far then at least he is not unfaithful, But Oh, my Lydia! may I interpret your repugnance to his addresses as an argument in my favour?

Lyd. I have already frankly declared my opinion of your character, It now remains with you to prove the truth of that opinion, and to determine my resolution accordingly. Do but bear up against adversity, so as to shew yourself equal to the possible return of prosperity—a trial, perhaps, ten times more dangerous—and be assured Mr. Beverley, that with the approbation of my friends, I shall be happy to give every proof of my esteem for so valuable a character.

Bev. My dearest Lydia! (*kissing her hand*) Modest, amiable, Lydia! When you avow esteem, let me presume to construe it affection! Oh Lydia,

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dia, you have made me fond of my misfortunes. Ease and affluence corrupted me, and had so weakened and enervated my mind, that the rough stroke of adversity would have stunned me beyond the power of recovery, had not your gentle hand raised me to the hope of happiness. Take your pupil, Lydia; and render him—for you only can effect it—oh render him worthy of so dear, so exquisite a mistress.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT



A C T III.

An Apartment in Golding's House.

Enter Servant shewing in Tropick.

Serv. **W**HAT must I say to Mr. Fable, sir?
Trop. Only let him know that his old friend Mr. Tropick, the ship's husband, desires to speak with him.

Serv. I shall, sir.

[*Exit.*

Tropick alone.

Yes, I shall speak to him—and pretty roundly too, I believe.—What times we live in! No morals, no order, no decency! Barefaced villainy at one end of the town, and villainy in a mask at the other!—But my old friend here a hypocrite! I should almost as soon have mistrusted myself. It is an unthankful office to give advice and reproof; but it is the duty, as well as privilege, of those who have been long acquainted with each other, to let an old friend know, that all the world thinks him a scoundrel.—Oh, here he is. I'll give it him—I'll lecture him—I'll—

Enter Fable.

Fab. Ha! my old friend, Tropick! How are you? How do you?

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Trop. Well, very well.

Fab. I am glad on't ; I rejoice to see you.

Trop. May be so, may be so.

Fab. And your family?—All well, I hope.

Trop. All very well.

Fab. And the young supercargo?—How does he go on?

Trop. Mighty well, mighty well.

Fab. Excellent!—And his elder brother that was placed at Madrafs, is he removed to Bengal yet, as he proposed?

Trop. He is, he is; but——

Fab. That's right: Madrafs for health, Bengal for wealth!—that's the maxim there, you know.

Trop. Very true, very true; but——

Fab. And Mrs. Tropick too—How is she? How is your wife?

Trop. P'shaw! let my wife alone: I want to speak with you, old Fable; I want to speak with you.

Fab. Well; why don't you then?

Trop. Because you hinder me. You stop my mouth with enquiries, and won't let me squeeze in a syllable edgeways—A plague of your questions!

Fab. Well, speak. I am all attention. What have you to say to me?

Trop. Have you a friend or acquaintance in the world?

Fab. I think so; some few true friends, many more very suspicious, and a number of common acquaintance.

Trop. And do you expect to keep one that has common sense or common honesty for the future?

Fab. Yes;—and yourself in particular.—But what's the matter? If you think I have done any thing wrong, it would be but friendly to tell me so.

F

Trop.

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Trop. I came on purpose to tell you ; I came on purpose to abuse you, old Fable.

Fab. I am obliged to you ; but for what reason ?

Trop. Every honest man should not only abhor a crime, but even keep clear of suspicion.

Fab. Impossible.

Trop. How so ?

Fab. Both are not in his power. Not to be criminal, indeed, lies in his own breast ! but suspicion and calumny, in the breasts and mouths of others. You consider yourself as an honest man, I suppose.

Trop. Zouns ! I know I am, without considering at all.

Fab. And yet, honest as you are, you could no more prevent my thinking you a rascal where I inclined to believe you one, than I could hinder your calling me so.

Trop. I tell you all the world calls you so. It is the talk of the whole city—the Alley is full of it—the 'Change rings with it—and by and by, I suppose, the talkers in Leadenhall-street will harrangue about it. You are pretty well paragraphed already, old Fable.

Fab. I can't help their talking or writing. I can only take care not to deserve it.

Trop. Not deserve it !—Why, was not Golding, the great banker here, your old friend and acquaintance ?

Fab. Most intimately so ; most confidentially ; or, at his departure for India, he would scarce have trusted his whole family and affairs to my care, with the particular charge of young Beverley.

Trop. Oh, did he so ?—Now we are come to the point then.—And a fine guardian you have shewn yourself—a pretty friend to Mr. Golding too ! You have staggered the credit of the house, driven the poor young fellow almost out of his senses, and made yourself his sole trustee and creditor.

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ditor. Every body sees what you drive at—but the court of chancery may bring you to account yet, old Fable.

Fab. Let the parties file their bill at their pleasure—or rather do you be my chancellor.

Trop. I your chancellor !

Fab. Yes, you, my friend. I'll put in my answer immediately—but remember, that while I call upon your judgment in equity, I must also insist on your secrecy.

Trop. What ! keep it a secret that you are an honest man ?—Let all the world suppose you a scoundrel ?

Fab. No matter. Don't let your zeal for my character teach them to unriddle the mystery at present ; but rather assist me in carrying on my project. First, however, promise silence. Give me your word, old friend.

Trop. My honour—Now you know you are sure of me.

Fab. I am convinced of it. You must know then, that the danger of the house, and the ruin of young Beverley, is all a mere fiction.

Trop. A lie !—Zouns ! to what purpose ?

Fab. The best in the world—A white lie, my friend ! to rescue Beverley, and save Mr. Golding.

Trop. A white lie ?—I don't understand you. Explain.

Fab. The young man was in the high road to destruction, and driving at such a rate that he must soon have overfet the whole undertaking.—It was time to pull the check-string.—To speak plainly ; intoxicated as he was by pleasure and vanity, and countenanced by Mrs. Golding, who ought to have discouraged him, direct advice would have been thrown away upon him. But, could I stand by a silent and inactive spectator of the ruin of a whole family ? No ; finding him incorrigible by

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softer means, I conjured up the phantom of poverty. The measures I have taken have already brought him to reason; he promises to become a new man; I shall ultimately appear to be a true friend; and the credit of the house will be more firmly established than ever.

Trop. I am speechless—struck dumb—you have taken my breath away—I have not a word to say against you—you are a very worthy, sensible, honest fellow, old Fable. You have redeemed your friend Golding, and will be the making of the young fellow's fortune.

Fab. Nay, I can't take the credit of his reformation entirely to myself neither. He is in love, it seems, with a most amiable young lady, whose tenderness is redoubled by his misfortunes, while no calamity seems to affect his mind but the imaginary want of a fortune suitable to his pretensions to her.

Trop. And how can you answer it to yourself, to retain his money in your hands, when he wishes to make so laudable a use of it?

Fab. I don't mean to retain it. Finding Beverley in so fair a way of amendment, I have already set another wheel in motion, and (unknown to him) circulated a report of a sudden turn of fortune in his favour.

Trop. Unknown to him, d'ye say?

Fab. Totally; and it is pleasant enough to see how awkwardly he receives the civilities which are paid to him in consequence of this report, while, unconscious of the cause, he expects (according to the way of the world) nothing but slights and reproaches. To confirm the report, however, and to put him into good humour with himself again, I mean to send a pretended agent or messenger to him, with letters and considerable remittances, as from Mr. Golding. All I want is a trusty person to discharge such a commission.

Trop.

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Trop. Can I be of any use to you?

Fab. Infinite, if you would undertake this negotiation.

Trop. I!—Why, I am unknown in the family, it's true—but then the letters—Mr. Golding's hand, you know—

Fab. Oh, reasons may be assigned for his making use of another hand.—Besides, they won't be examined so nicely. You come to bring money, not to receive it—and that makes a wide difference. But we lose time.—Will you assist me?

Trop. I will—hand and heart—body and soul, old Fable. Let me have the stores, sails, masts, and rigging, and I'll fit him out as handsomely as any vessel I ever furnished in my life. You are a true-hearted, sound-bottomed fellow, old Fable. But what an ass have I made of myself!—Here did I come open-mouthed to reproach you for your roguery; and now you have persuaded me to become your accomplice.

Fab. My ally—leagued in honour, not combined and confederated in villany. But come with me to my closet, and I'll furnish you with the needful.

Trop. I'll follow you; but I must, I must ask your pardon first. It touched me to the quick to hear you were a rascal, and I could not help telling you so.—I beg your pardon again, and again, and again, my friend. You are one of the worthiest men in the world—but, you know, there are not a more silly, empty, insolent, impudent, ignorant, lying vermin, than your framers of common reports and collectors of personal paragraphs—wretches that pretend to know every thing, and know nothing. Your thoughts, words, and actions, they know them all; what you have done, what you are doing, and what you intend to do, they know: know what a papist tells his confessor, or the king whispers the queen: things that never have been,
will

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will be, nor are like to be, still they know—true or false, right or wrong, praise or blame, they don't care a half-penny.—And I, to give a moment's credit to them! Forgive me this once, my friend; and for the future, without certain authority, I'll never believe a word I hear from common report, or depend upon a syllable I read in the news-papers.

[*Exeunt.*]

The street.

Enter Lord Riot and Colonel Rakish.

Col. Rak. But do you think there is any truth in this report, my lord?

Lord Riot. Fact—you may depend upon't. A proctor from the city, who came to me about my suit with lady Riot, now depending in the Commons, told me that he heard it at the St. Paul's Coffee-house from a gentleman that brought the news piping hot from sir George Sterling at Garraway's, and from some other particular friends of old Fable.

Col. Rak. So then Beverley is upon his legs again, and Golding is not ruined after all.

Lord Riot. Full of treasure as a mine, with a certain income as large as a jaghire—sent home whole lacks of rupees by the last Indiamen, and bushels of diamonds as plenty as Scotch pebbles.

Col. Rak. A lucky turn for Beverley! I wish I had known it before; I would not have blackballed him at Stapylton's; but, faith, I thought he had nothing for it but to shoot himself.

Lord Riot. He is actually meditating a very desperate action. I hear he is going to be married.

Col. Rak. Ay? to whom, my lord?

Lord Riot. Why to miss——Oh, here he is to give an account of himself.

Enter

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Enter Beverley.

How do you, how do you, Beverley? Nay, never look so grave and serious, man! I know you have no occasion. But why did you not call as I desired you, Beverley? I love to serve you, and should have been very glad to see you.

Bev. I am obliged to your lordship, but I have been engaged in particular business.

Lord Riot. Business! You used to think pleasure your business.

Bev. And now, thank heaven, I have learnt to think business my pleasure.

Col. Rak. Ah, that's the true language of a man that is making a fortune and rolling in money, my lord. But Beverley, my dear boy, why did you not call on me, if you ever thought there was the least shadow of an occasion? You must be sure that all I could command, was entirely at your service.

Bev. I am obliged to you, colonel; but there was not the least necessity for it.

Lord Riot. No, no; so it seems. I am very glad to hear it. Will you look in upon us at Almack's this evening, Beverley?

Bev. It will not be in my power, my lord.

Col. Rak. We dine at the Tilt-Yard Coffee-house to-day. There is some excellent claret. Will you go along with us, Beverley.

Bev. Not now, I thank you, colonel; I am going to Mr. Denier.

Lord Riot. Well; let us see you soon; don't forsake your friends, Beverley.

Col. Rak. No; don't let us lose you; come amongst us soon, my boy. In the mean time, I wish you much joy.

Lord Riot. So do I. Good day, Beverley?

Col.

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Col. Rak. Good day, good day to you, Beverley!

[*Exeunt Lord Riot, and Col. Rakish.*]

Beverley alone.

With me joy! What do they mean? surely not to insult me! No, no; their manner was frank, and hearty, and cordial.—And yet, I thought they behaved oddly on the first shock of my affairs. But, perhaps, my sensibility was too quick on that occasion, and my confusion on the breaking out of my misfortunes made me see every thing through a false medium. Yes, yes, I dare say I wronged my friends, and I am heartily concerned at it.

Enter Cash.

Cash. Oh, Mr. Beverley, your servant! I am glad I have found you. I have just been at your house to desire you to discount these bills. They are indorsed by good men, and have not above a fortnight or three weeks to run, sir.

Bev. Discount, Mr. Cash? What do you mean? You know I never venture to do any thing of that sort at present.

Cash. Not venture, indeed!—Well said, Mr. Beverley; you are pleased to be pleasant.

Bev. I wish you would please to be serious. I am so I can assure you, Mr. Cash.

Cash. What! you won't discount the bills then?

Bev. No.

Cash. Consider the names at the back of them.

Bev. No matter. It don't suit us.

Cash. "It don't suit us,"—that's the banker's old answer in the negative.—When you're come to that, I am sure you won't do it—I am sorry for it—I must try some other house—Your servant.

[*Exit.*]

Bev. Yours! Now for Denier.

[*Going.*]

Enter

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Enter Hazard.

Haz. Mr. Beverly! one word with you, if you please.

Bev. (turning.) Mr. Hazard! Your pleasure, sir!

Haz. We have a policy here on Sir Francis Racket, insured for a year for twelve thousand—and we should be glad of your name at the bottom of it.

Bev. My name, Mr. Hazard!

Haz. If you please, sir.—There is a handsome premium, and sir Francis is a very good life—He was shewn at the coffee-house yesterday—a very good life—not above six or seven and twenty—a little wild, indeed, but suicide and the hands of justice, you know, are always excepted.

Bev. I pretend to underwrite, Mr. Hazard! Do you want to ruin me intirely?

Haz. Ruin you! ha, ha, ha! ruin you—a very good jest, faith—I wish I was ruined your way, Mr. Beverley. *(Laughing.)*

Bev. Do you laugh at me?

Haz. No, no—I don't laugh at you—but upon my word you make me merry, Mr. Beverley.—Poor ruined gentleman! ha, ha!—Will you fill up the policy, sir?

Bev. No, not at 50 *per Cent.* sir. You know my situation, and let me tell you, sir, I look upon your application at this time as impertinent—particularly impertinent. *(turns aside.)*

Haz. Know my situation! Lord, how some folks swell on their good fortune! He is turning fine gentleman again already, I perceive.—Impertinent, quotha! I wish he would have set his name to the policy, tho'—I would rather not have had an Israelite among the underwriters—however, let the

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worst come to the worst, we are sure of little Abraham at last. Impertinent, indeed! [Exit.

Beverley alone.

This affront, among many other mortifications, is brought upon me by my past folly and imprudence. Not only censured by the sensible and the generous, but reproached by the base, ridiculed by the malicious, and insulted by the meanest of mankind—confusion!—But it is no wonder that I should be treated contemptuously by others, when my conduct has rendered me so thoroughly despicable even to myself. [Exit.

An Apartment in Denier's House.

Enter Lydia and Denier.

Lyd. Nay, cease, I beseech you, sir! Do not, by urging me on a point so very disagreeable, render it too painful a task to preserve that respect for you that I wish to maintain!

Den. Engaging Lydia! How much your reserve becomes you. Yet, let me flatter myself it is mere coyness—and these little pruderies—for so I will suppose them—call forth new graces in your character, and revive the flame you would attempt to extinguish.

Lyd. It is, however, with a peculiar ill grace, sir, that you now pretend to discover in me these latent qualifications—You who seemed lately so desirous of recommending Mr. Beverley, and now, from what motive you know best, honouring me with your own addresses.

Den. Beverley!—Beverley is convinced of my inviolable friendship for him—but it is no wonder, Lydia, that I, who had daily and hourly opportunities of contemplating your perfections, should be

be

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be more deeply struck, than he that saw you but occasionally. I should not, however, such is my regard for him, have urged my own suit, without being previously assured of his absolute indifference,

Lyd. Indifference !—As to that, sir, Mr. Beverley's indifference, or Mr. Beverley's partiality, in this instance, is not at all material. I am placed in your family, it is true ; and my situation in life is not as yet positively ascertained. I was taught to believe, indeed, that I should ere now have been received and acknowledged by my friends : but I consider some late events as an earnest of their speedy appearance, and I trust they will offer no violence to my inclinations. I am determined, at least in my own breast ; and be assured, sir, that no interest, no force, no time, shall shake my resolution.

Den. Your friends, madam, may possibly be of a different opinion ; and though I might not wish them to put any constraint on you, they will hardly be partial to the ruinous state of poor Beverley.

Lyd. In you, sir, his intimate friend, such a reflection is particularly ungenerous : yet do not presume too much upon that notion, sir ! Whatever I may think of Mr. Beverley, fortune at least appears inclined to favour him.

Den. Riddles ! riddles, Lydia !

Lyd. You have not heard the late news then. He now seems as much courted by prosperity, as he was but lately threatened by misfortunes : and I am this moment going with Mrs. Carlton, to give Mrs. Golding joy on the occasion.

Den. And to congratulate Beverley ?

Lyd. Perhaps so—but be that as it may, you must at least allow that I have dealt candidly with

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you. Grave as I may seem, sir, I would not wish to appear a prude ; and I scorn all coquetry.

[*Exit.*

Denier alone.

Yes, yes ; she's fond of Beverly I see—doatingly fond of him—and when a sentimental lady is once touched by a fond passion, the rage is incurable.—But this sudden turn of fortune too in his favour—that I warrant has its effect with her—gold, gold, will have its weight—I shall soon know the particulars.—In the mean time, suppose I make a merit with Beverley of sacrificing my passion to him.—He certainly likes her ; and it will be a cheap piece of generosity to resign that which I have no hopes of obtaining. I love to husband my good offices : ay, ay ! that's the true policy ! to gain the good will of others, without touching your own property.—Make a small present to those that you are sure want nothing at all, and it turns to account, like money put out at high interest.—And ever, ever open your purse, and offer to lend to those who you know have no occasion to borrow !

Enter Beverley.

Ha ! Beverley ! you're welcome. Good day to you !

Bev. Good day, Denier ! I was impatient to see you.

Den. Yes, I dare say. I knew you would not be long out of the house. But come ; confess honestly, Beverley ! Was this visit wholly designed for me ? Was it not partly—nay chiefly—intended for Lydia ?

Bev. Lydia !—Lydia !—I should have been very glad to see Lydia—I hope she is well.

Den.

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Den. Very well—and very much at your service—very much at your service, Beverley.

Bev. What do you mean?

Den. I mean what I say—and I have been thinking too on what passed at our last meeting, Beverley.

Bev. On what subject?

Den. Nay, nay; there is but one subject of any consequence now, you know. But I am afraid you dissembled with your friend a little. You should be frank and generous with me. The commerce of friendship can't subsist without it; and I have that title to the knowledge of what passes in your breast, Beverley.

Bev. It was then in a state of insurrection, and I was not master of its emotions, nor indeed, well able to marshal or distinguish them: but you know I never scrupled to lay my heart open to you.

Den. Why, to do you justice, I believe your not being explicit, arose from the agitation of your mind at that instant, rather than from want of sincerity—and I was a little slow of apprehension on my part—but now we perfectly understand each other.—I see you love Lydia: I am sure of it—and out of friendship and regard to you, my dear Beverley—I frankly give up all my pretensions to her.

Bev. Generous, generous Denier!

Den. Not at all—not at all—all my good offices with her friends, my correspondents in India, Mr. Fable, and your own family, you have a right to command.

Bev. Your kindness overwhelms me. How shamefully was I disposed for a time to do injustice to friendship! I now despise the mean and narrow common-place maxims of our friends falling off from us. There is a jealousy in the unfortunate—an unworthy suspicion of neglect and contempt

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on account of their distresses—My slightest acquaintance have given me proofs of their good will, and your friendship is above all acknowledgment.

Den. I am happy in an occasion of testifying my unquestionable regard for you.

Bev. I don't doubt it.

Den. Depend on it.

Bev. My best friend!

Den. My dear, dear Beverley!

(Exit, pressing hands, embracing, protesting, &c.)

ACT



A C T IV.

An Apartment in Golding's House.

Enter Fable and Check.

Fab. **T**HIS way, this way, Check! And are you sure, quite sure this is fact?

Check. Too true, fir.

Fab. Speculated in India-stock, do you say?

Check. To an incredible amount, fir! here's the particular, fir.

Fab. Let me see—let me see—(*looking at the paper.*)—Confusion!—and had you no knowledge or suspicion of these transactions till now, Check?

Check. Not the least item, fir. Little Smouse the broker is but just gone, and says he has done more stock for my young master, than for half the rest of the Alley.

Fab. What impudence! What madness!

Check. High play, indeed, fir! Sir Charles Ducat of Mincing-lane, and my young master, it seems, have had the whole game between them. My young master is the bull, and fir Charles is the bear. He agreed for stock, expecting it to be up at three hundred by this time; but lack-a-day, fir, it has been falling ever since.—You know the rescouter day, fir; and if Mr. Beverley does not pay his differences within these four and twenty hours, the world cannot hinder his being a lame duck.

Fab.

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Fab. It scarce signifies what becomes of him—a prodigal!—But my friend Mr. Golding—

Cbeck. Ay, if Mr. Beverly fails, the whole house must suffer, sir. Having stood the late run upon us, our credit was firmer than ever.—But, after a tumble in the Alley, our notes will no more pass than a light guinea.

Fab. Is Mr. Beverley within?

Cbeck. I thought I heard him come in just as I was following you hither, sir.

Fab. Let him know I desire to speak with him.

Cbeck. I will, sir, [Exit.

Fable alone.

So!—To trifle with serious matters is playing with fire, I find. The ruin I counterfeited is now becoming real; and the measures I embraced to reform Beverley, and save my friend, will only serve to hasten their destruction. The suddenness of the alarm confounds me. The shortness of the time too!—Oh, you are here, sir.

[Enter Beverley.

Bev. To attend your pleasure, sir.

Fab. To witness your own irretrievable ruin, sir!—How comes it, Mr. Beverley, how comes it, I say, that you have hitherto kept your adventuring in the Alley, your infamous gambling in India-stock, so profound a secret from me?

Bev. Spare your reproaches, Mr. Fable! They are needless. I know all my fault, and all my misery. Ruin and infamy now stare me in the face, and drive me to despair. The vain hopes I had cherished of avoiding both are frustrated; and there is not at this moment a more pitiable object than the wretch you now see before you.

Fab. Pitiable! And what part of your conduct, sir, has entitled you to compassion?—To that compassion, which the characteristick humanity of
this

this nation has ever shewn to the unfortunate?— Sometimes, indeed, to the imprudent?—Have you, sir, any claim to this? You, who have so grossly abused the mutual confidence between man and man, and betrayed the important trust reposed in you—What! a banker! a banker, Mr. Beverley, not only squandering his own fortune, but playing with the property of others!—the property of unconscious persons silently melting away, as if by forgery, under his hands, without their own prodigality!—And is such a man, because he is at length buried in the ruin he has pulled down on others, an object of compassion? No, sir, nothing is to be lamented but the mildness of his punishment.

Bev. The very atrociousness of his crime, the pungency of his guilt and remorse, which put him upon a rack severer than any penal laws could devise, still render him an object of pity.

Fab. Your remorse and reformation, I fear, were but hypocrisy. Where was that ingenuous confidence that would else have prompted you to lay open this dark transaction, as well as the rest of your unjustifiable extravagance? Your candour, in that instance, would at least have argued the sincerity of your professions, and afforded a real proof of your penitence.

Bev. Oh, sir, do not attribute my silence to deceit! I had been taught to hope and believe that the event would have proved prosperous; and thought to have surprised you, and charmed Lydia, with my unexpectèd good fortune. But oh, what a cruel reverse have I now to experience!

Fab. A reverse that the daily experience of thousands might have warned you to avoid, rather than to build your hopes on such a sandy foundation. The tide of eastern riches flowing in upon

H

us,

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us, which might have scattered plenty over our country, such adventurers as you, Mr. Beverley, have rendered the parent of poverty, and the means of almost general bankruptcy. A simple individual to rise to day worth half a million—an undone man to morrow! Are these the principles of commerce? Were these the lessons which your worthy father transmitted to you? or which I have inculcated?

Bev. Have mercy, Mr. Fable; consider my situation, and do not seek to aggravate the horrors of it—I who so lately thought myself in the road to prosperity, hoping to retrieve my fortune, and redeem my character, now shortly to be branded as the most faithless of beings, the basest of mankind! Distraction!

Fab. Your situation, I own is dreadful; but by what an unpardonable complication of depravity have you brought it upon yourself, Mr. Beverley! Not content with one species of enormity, but industriously multiplying your ruin, and combining in yourself the double vices of a man of business, and a man of pleasure! Gambling the whole morning in the Alley, and sitting down at night to *quinze* and hazard at St. James's; by turns, making yourself a prey to the rooks and sharks at one end of the town, and the bulls and bears at the other! Formerly a young spendthrift was contented with one species of prodigality—but it was reserved for you and your precious associates to compound this new medley of folly, this olio of vice and extravagance, at once including the dissoluteness of an abandoned debauchee, the chicanery of a pettyfogger, and the dirty tricking of a fraudulent stock-jobbing broker.

Bev. Go on; go on, sir! it is less than I merit, and I can endure it with patience. My late hu-

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miliation was but the prologue to my total ruin. The most desperate calamity cannot now make me more miserable.

Fab. Oh, Beverley! did you but know the consolation I had in store for you, the schemes I had formed to make you easy in your circumstances, and happy in your love, you would still more regret this cruel disappointment.

Bev. Happy in my love!—Oh Lydia, I dare not even think of my presumption in having aspired to your favour!

Fab. Go young man! go to those friends on whom you formerly placed such reliance, and try what they will contribute to deliver you from ruin!—Leave me a while—studying to exert my weak endeavours to preserve my friend—or, if they fail, struggling to arm my mind with fortitude and patience.

Bev. Where shall I direct myself? to whom shall I apply? My situation I fear is hopeless. The inhabitant of a dungeon, under sentence of execution, is in a state of happiness, to what I feel at this moment. [Exit.

Fable alone.

Though he appears at this instant so very culpable, I cannot but be touched by his agitation and remorse.—Yet this is not a moment for passion, but reflection.—The ruin, if not prevented, so thoroughly overwhelming! The time so pressing! My friend absent! The property I can command, large and considerable as it is, not to be converted into specie directly!—What can be done?—Mr. Tropick must return me the money in his hands which I must now prevent his delivering, as well as the supposed letters to Beverley—yet that will be far, very far from sufficient—how to make up the rest then!—There is one way indeed—but is that

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warrantable? Lydia's trust money.—Have I a right on any pretence whatever, to lay my hands but for a moment, on that sacred deposit?—And yet, where would be the injury? I am sure of replacing the sum before there is the least probability of its being demanded: and that resource, in conjunction with others already in my power, would supply every emergency. My absent friend would be rescued from certain ruin, even the transgression of Beverley might be concealed from the world, and Lydia would suffer no wrong, nor even be alarmed by suspicion.—It shall be so. I'll see this broker and settle the matter immediately.—And yet, my heart recoils at this transaction. The most pious frauds are at least ambiguous; and I feel it as the most cruel necessity to be driven to indirect means, even for the most generous purposes.—But I have entangled myself by one crooked action, and I must endeavour to redeem all by another. [Exit.

Another Apartment in the same House.

Enter Handy and Mrs. Flounce.

Handy. Oh! if this be the case, I shall give warning immediately.

Mrs. Flounce. So shall I, I promise them. Ruined indeed! in my mind it is a monstrous piece of impudence in these trumpery merchant-people to keep gentlefolks for their servants, like people of quality.—Mrs. Golding quotha!—a gentlewoman of my genteel family—as wealthy a rope-maker's daughter as any in the city of Bristol! equal to Mrs. Golding, I hope, at any time.

Handy. Equal, Mrs. Flounce! ay, and a great deal superior. An old worn-out bit of beggar's-tape, that binds the hem of quality!—imitating countesses and duchesses—endeavouring to adapt her

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her vulgar west-country airs to the meridian of St. James's—aping in her Bristol manner, the airs and graces of persons of fashion—but no more like persons of fashion, than a Bristol stone is to a diamond!

Mrs. Flounce. Well! service (as they say) is no inheritance, Mr. Handy—so I shan't go into place again—not I, truly—I have taken a house at Hogfden, and intend to set up a boarding-school to teach young ladies breeding.

Handy. And you'll have great success, I dare say, Mrs. Flounce.—As to me, my master was to have got me a good place in the India-House; or to have sent me out with the next cargo of judges and generals to Bengal.—But now he's ruined in the Alley, his interest I suppose is all gone—as well as his principal—eh, Mrs. Flounce! But this is always the case, when Lombard Street will travel to Pall Mall. Quite another latitude! Is it not, Mrs. Flounce?—But odso! here's somebody coming up stairs—we'll settle this matter in the housekeeper's room. Your hand, my dear!

Mrs. Flounce. And my heart too, Mr. Handy! but I shall pick a quarrel with my lady, and give warning as soon as she comes home.

Handy. To be sure, Mrs. Flounce! There's nothing more to be got in this house. We'll both give warning immediately; and we'll give up the month's wages to the poor devils out of mere charity. [Exit.

Enter a Servant followed by Golding.

Gold. Mr. Fable not at home, d'ye say?

Serv. But just gone out, sir.

Gold. Nor Mr. Beverley?

Serv. No, sir.

Gold. Nor Mrs. Golding neither?

Serv.

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Serv. My lady has been abroad with two other ladies most part of the morning, but we expect her home very soon, sir.

Gold. Well—well—as soon as any of them return, let me know.

Serv. I will, sir.

[*Exit.*

Golding alone.

Very strange all this! I don't understand one word I have heard or read of my friends, or myself, or my affairs since I landed. Thou art in a maze, friend Golding! But a man who comes home from the Indies, must expect at his return to meet with some new events to surprise him—his house burnt, his daughter eloped, his son engaged in a fray, his wife dead, or some little accident. The principal object of my voyage too has not yet answered, though in other points it has amply succeeded. I long to see Mr. Fable, or Beverley, or my wife——Who have we here?

Enter Tropick.

What is your pleasure, sir?

Trop. To speak with Mr. Beverley. But he is not at home, they say.

Gold. So it seems, sir.

Trop. Having some very particular business with him, I must beg leave to wait for his return.

Gold. I am concerned in Mr. Beverley's affairs. Pray, sir, what is your business? You may trust it to me, sir.

Trop. I have letters of great consequence from abroad to deliver to him, and some more for Mr. Fable.

Gold. From abroad! from what part of the world? and from whom, sir?

Trop. From India—from my old friend and acquaintance Mr. Golding.

Gold.

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Gold. Mr. Golding!—So here's an old friend and acquaintance of mine that I never saw in my life before. (*aside.*)—And pray how is Mr. Golding, sir?

Trop. Never better, sir.

Gold. Where is he at present, sir?

Trop. In India, sir?

Gold. What part of India?

Trop. Bengal.

Gold. I don't know that ever I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Golding. Pray what sort of a man is he?

Trop. As good a sort of man as breathes, sir.

Gold. Yes; but his person!

Trop. Oh, as to his person, that is indifferent enough—a little, wizen, withered, whipper snapper old gentleman, shorter by the head and shoulders than you or I, sir.—A little merry man though—many a curry have I eat in his company—many a sagar have little Goldy and I smoaked together.

Gold. What you and little Goldy are particular friends then?

Trop. Very particular; or he hardly would have entrusted me with my present commission, I believe.

Gold. What may that commission be, sir?

Trop. Nay, I may tell you: and indeed the affair will soon be known by every body.—I am not only commissioned to deliver the letters I mentioned, but charged with a very capital remittance from my friend Golding, consigned to Mr. Fable, in favour of the young gentleman here, Mr. Beverley, for whom I now came to enquire.

Gold. And have you this capital remittance with you at present, sir?

Trop. Yes, yes; I have my credentials. Here they are! (*clipping his hand to his pocket*) safe and sound,

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found, I warrant you—and as good as the Bank, sir.

Gold. And you had this money directly from Mr. Golding, you say?

Trop. From his own hands—from whom else should I have it?

Gold. Nay, how should I know! But it is very well as it is—very well. Be so good then, if you please, sir, to deliver this very capital sum of money to me, sir!

Trop. To you? on what account, friend!

Gold. Because, as you say, you had it from me.

Trop. Why, who are you?

Gold. The very person from whose own hands, you confess you received it—Mr. Golding.

Trop. You Mr. Golding!

Gold. The same.

Trop. No, no—not you, indeed—that will never pass, I promise you.

Gold. Not Mr. Golding!—Why, who the devil am I then?

Trop. A damn'd rogue, I believe. Just now you said, you did not know Mr. Golding; and as soon as you heard I had brought a considerable sum of money, you are turned into Mr. Golding yourself.—But you may cast your skin again, old serpent. The trick won't take, I assure you.

Gold. Trick!—This is the most impudent piece of knavery!—Trick, indeed! I believe, there is some trick upon me here, if I knew what to make of it—I'll have you taken up for a new kind of forgery; for bringing money upon false pretences—for—

Trop. And you insist upon it that you are Mr. Golding?

Gold. To be sure, I do. I'll call the whole house to prove the truth of it.

Trop.

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Trop. And Mr. Golding, the true Mr. Golding, is really returned from India then?

Gold. To be sure he is. Can't you see, sir?

Trop. I have made a fool of myself a second time—that's what I see—but be who you will, Mr. Golding, or not Mr. Golding, I shall not deliver the letters or money to you, old gentleman!—I'll go back again like a fool as I came, to the old fool that sent me—on such a fool's errand.

[*Exit.*

Golding alone.

What the plague! Am I in India still then? or in the moon? and myself and the people about me all lunatics?—Our affairs they say are all in confusion, and yet Beverley is going to be married.—To whom I wonder!—No matter who—the match I intended will be quite out of the question.—Another piece of ill fortune!—But I am in the dark all this while—talking of every thing, and acquainted with nothing.—Well! since I can find nobody, and get no intelligence at home, I will seek for it abroad—by delivering my letters, and making enquiries at Mr. Denier's—(*going*) But stay! here's a woman at last. My wife, I hope.—Hey! how's this? Do I see right? Mrs. Carlton!

Enter Mrs. Carlton.

Of all the women on earth, Mrs. Carlton!

Mrs. Carlt. Mercy on me! What do I see? Can that be Mr. Winterton?

Gold. No.

Mrs. Carlt. Yes. It is he—

Gold. No, no, no, I tell you!

Mrs. Carlt. What! shan't I believe my senses? Are not you Mr. Winterton?

I

Gold.

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Gold. Hush!—I am glad to see you—You know me well enough—but don't call me by that name again for the life of you!

Mrs. Carl. Why your name is Winterton— isn't it sir?

Gold. Hift! Don't bawl so—Come away from that door a little—and not a breath of that name, I charge you.

Mrs. Carl. Lord, Lord; what's the matter with you?—What's the man so much afraid of?

Gold. What most men are afraid of—My wife.

Mrs. Carl. Your wife!

Gold. Ay; Mrs. Golding. Now you are satisfied.

Mrs. Carl. What and are you Mr. Golding then after all, sir?

Gold. I believe so. I was Mr. Golding before I went abroad—but I scarce know who I am, or what I am, or where I am, since I came back again.

Mrs. Carl. So this was the reason then that we, poor souls, could never discover what was become of you, Mr. Winterton—Mr. Golding, I beg your pardon, sir. But you need not be so terrified—for I left Mrs. Golding on a morning visit, and she is not come in yet.

Gold. In the mean while, let us make the best use of our time then—Where is my daughter? where is Lydia?

Mrs. Carl. I left her with Mrs. Golding. You'll see them both here presently.

Gold. That's well—but we must be cautious—How does she do?

Mrs. Carl. As well as can be expected in her situation.

Gold. As well as can be expected!—What do you mean?—Her situation!—Not undone, I hope.

Mrs. Carl.

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Mrs. Carlt. Only over head and ears in love, fir.

Gold. In love! with whom?

Mrs. Carlt. With the young gentleman of this house—Mr. Beverley.

Gold. Beverley!—Why he is going to be married.

Mrs. Carlt. So they say, fir.

Gold. But to whom? do you know?

Mrs. Carlt. To her, fir.

Gold. To Lydia?

Mrs. Carlt. Yes to be sure, fir. Heaven forbid it should have been any body else.—But his affairs are all in confusion, it seems, and there's such a pother between them, that I am half distracted about it.

Gold. And I am quite distracted—distracted with joy, Mrs. Carlton! Heaven be praised!—Come, come; here is one piece of good fortune however!—Leave young folks to themselves, I say.—What I have been labouring and studying to bring about, have they settled at once. The very thing I could have wished! Half the purpose of my voyage to India, and the meaning of the money lately remitted, for which Mr. Fable is appointed trustee.

Mrs. Carlt. And does Mr. Fable know any thing of her relation to you, fir?

Gold. Not a syllable—heaven be praised, not a syllable!—I was not willing to explain the matter, till I saw more likelihood of my scheme's taking place.—And now from what I can judge of his proceedings, it is lucky that I never trusted him. An old fox! a caterpillar! a viper! Beverley's sole trustee, and creditor indeed!—a crocodile!

Mrs. Carlt. But was it not a little cruel in you to keep us so long in the dark, Mr. Golding?

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Gold. Nay I have not been so much to blame neither, Mrs. Carlton. My first marriage with Lydia's mother when I was an idle young fellow, was a foolish love business—and I knew that my having a daughter abroad would have been an objection to my present wife's relations—so I fairly kept the whole matter a secret.—Lydia's mother dying in child birth, and my present marriage having taken place, during the infancy of Lydia, I directed her to be educated by another name, under which I once visited you and my daughter in India—that's the whole affair!—But not a word more of the name or the business, I charge you!

Mrs. Carlt. Not for the world, sir, till you think proper to mention it.

Mrs. Gold. (behind) Desire Miss Lydia to see the things taken out of the coach, and then to follow me into the drawing-room!

Mrs. Carlt. Ha! the ladies are here—here already I protest, sir.

Gold. Yes I hear my wife's voice. I would not have her surprise us together. I might appear somewhat awkward and confused, perhaps. I'll run and give her the meeting—but remember now, not a wry word for your life! Mum, mum, Mrs. Carlton! [Exit.

Mrs. Carlton alone.

You may depend upon me, sir.—Ah Mr. Golding, Mr. Golding! There is no trusting to looks, I find. Who would have thought of your passing by a wrong name? Who would have suspected such a grave, demure looking gentleman?

Enter Mr. and Mrs. Golding.

Mrs. Gold. My dear love! I am transported to see you.—This is the most agreeable surprize—I thought

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thought the last ships that came in would have brought me nothing but letters—or, perhaps, a pagoda, or a monkey at best. But my husband!—my dear love!—Oh my dear, let me introduce a very agreeable, genteel young lady to you!—a young lady of fortune and family—I assure you.—My husband, my dear child! (*introducing Lydia*) My dear, miss Lydia Winterton!

Lyd. Ha! my father! Mr. Winterton! (*faints away.*)

Mrs. Gold. She faints away—take care of the child!

Maids enter and run to assist Lydia.

Lord! what's the meaning of this?—She cried out, father! and called you Mr. Winterton.

Gold. Yes—she did say something about Betterton.

Mrs. Carl. Ay, the poor child has very weak spirits.—Every little thing flutters her.—And Mr. Golding is a little like her papa too, I think—especially about the nose.

Gold. Ay; may be so—may be so—but, my dear, suppose you take her into your chamber, and let her lie down a little to recover her spirits!

Mrs. Gold. Ay; we'll soon bring her to herself again—this way, Molly—keep the eau de luce to her nose.—This is from riding backwards in the coach, I fancy—this way, gently, Molly! gently.

[*Mrs. Gold. and Maids lead out Lydia.*]

Remain Mrs. Carlton and Golding.

Gold. So, so! Here was an escape! Murder will out.

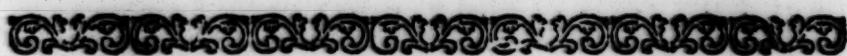
Mrs. Carl. Never fear, never fear, sir! I'll go in to Lydia directly—let no body be about her but myself—and as soon as she recovers, I'll teach her
her

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her lesson and give her the right cue, I warrant you.

Gold. Ay, do so, do so, Mrs. Carlton! Take care, I beseech you! For the sake of peace and quietness keep this matter a secret! I shall never be able to break it to Mrs. Golding—she would think herself injured, cheated, robbed, and undone.—And if she were once to know Lydia was a daughter of mine, she would ring it in my ears as long as I live—a smoaky house, and a scolding wife, you know!—I need say no more—It is a kind of hell to inhabit one, and the devil himself would scarce live with the other. [*Exeunt.*

A C T



A C T V.

An Apartment in Denier's House.

Denier and Capias.

Den. **V**ERY well, very well!—And you have him safe then, Mr. Capias?

Cap. Safe and secure, I warrant you, sir. I put the writ into sure hands—those that will touch a man let him be ever so shy—however, they had not much ado in this instance.—They planted themselves at the corner, stopt Mr. Golding near his own door, and told him their business: he went with them at once, and is now lodged with my friend Snap in Shire Lane.

Den. This comes from early intelligence. No minister, no general, no broker could turn it to greater advantage.

Cap. But how did you procure it, sir? You are the first upon the roll—I searched the sheriff's office, and there is nothing else out against Mr. Golding, or any body connected with him.

Den. Beverley, knowing me to be his friend, came to acquaint me with his distress in the Alley. The natural consequences of that adventure are obvious: and all my India concerns, remittances, and money transactions coming through their house, it struck me with a panick; but by
good

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good luck, he was scarce gone before I had notice of Mr. Golding's return by letters from India, brought by the same ships in which he came over. I did not lose a moment. I dare say he had not once entered his doors when the officers met him, and perhaps Beverley himself is not yet apprised of his arrival. Am not I a man of dispatch, Mr. Capias?

Cap. A Cæsar, a Machiavel, sir! You know all the turnings and windings and narrow back-stairs of the law too. You feel your own way; and are client, counsel, and attorney, all in one, sir!

Den. And have you the deed ready, Capias?

Cap. Here it is, sir, perused, signed, and settled by old Steady, of Lincoln's-Inn—an excellent workman—and if we can prevail on Mr. Golding to execute it, you'll come in for an exclusive lien upon his effects, instead of compounding with the other creditors under a commission of bankruptcy, which I suppose will be taken out in less than these three days.

Den. Ay—and under which they will not pay five shillings in the pound, perhaps—such a tumble!—sign the deed! tell him he must sign it—His mind's unsettled yet, and he'll be easily persuaded—Besides, he'll be glad to serve a particular friend—It can't affect him, you know—the assignees will divide the remainder.—I have been a constant friend to the house—he'll be glad to return the obligation, and I shall fall upon my legs again.

Cap. Let us lose no time, the sooner he executes the better, sir!

Den. Come along then! I'll attend you to Mr. Snap's. I have not seen Mr. Golding since his return, and we should visit our friends in their affliction, you know—come along Mr. Capias! [*Exeunt.*

Scene

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Scene changes to a room in Snap's house.

Fable and Snap.

Fab. Every thing much to my satisfaction; nothing here to complain of, I assure you, Mr. Snap. I never was more comfortably lodged in my life, never wish for better attendance, or more convenient accommodation.

Snap. We does all in our power to oblige company, fir.—No body can do no more, you know—especially such as behaves like gentlemen, like your honour, fir—for we has them of all sorts.—Within this fortnight, there has been no less than four or five different lodgers in this very apartment.—The room is genteel enough for that matter.—Let me see, who was they?—An ensign in the guards; a poet-man from Little-Britain; a Scotch actor-man! an old battered lady from Soho; and a very fine young one from the New Buildings at Marybone—that's five—and now we have the honour of your honour to make up the even half-dozen, fir.

Fab. I hope not to give you much trouble, Mr. Snap.

Snap. No, no; you knows you'll soon be relieved I dare say, your honour.

Fab. Were my letters all delivered according to the directions?

Snap. Every one, fir; and the gentlefolks says they will be here presently.—I thinks I hears somebody at the door now.—Shall I shew them up, fir?

Fab. If you please, Mr. Snap.

Snap. Perhaps, they chuses some refreshment.—I've some fine dry sherry—very good for a whet in the morning.

Enter Tropick.

Fab. Ha! my friend, I am happy to see you.—
Mr. Snap, good morning to you.

Snap. Gentlemen, your servant.—Shall I send up
a bottle of white wine, or a bowl of punch, sir?

Fab. Not at present, I thank you, Mr. Snap.—
If any body else enquires for Mr. Golding, be so
good as to shew them up.

Snap. I will, sir.—Your servant—Gentlemen,
your servant. [Exit.

Manent Fable and Tropick.

Fab. This is kind, my friend. You little thought
of my desiring a visit from you at this house, I be-
lieve.

Trop. Look ye, Fable, I don't know what to
make of all this.—I don't understand you.—You
may be an honest man, perhaps.—I hope you are
an honest man; but you look very much like a
rogue at present, I can tell you.—First of all, you
employ me in a damned ridiculous business, in
which I have made a cursed fool of myself—and
that is scarce over, than in comes a note from you
at a sponging-house, desiring me to come there, but
not to ask for you by your own name. What's the
meaning of all this, master Fable?

Fab. No harm, I assure you, friend. In regard
to the business you mention, I meant to stop your
going, if, unluckily, it had not been too late;
and, as to your not asking for me here by my own
name, I desired it, because I am not here in my
own right, but as the representative of another
person.

Trop. Another person! I understand you less and
less. Why, zouns, man, they can't arrest people
by proxy.

Fab.

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Fab. No; but they may by mistake; and I have humoured the mistake, in order to serve the real party, and punish the rascally creditor.

Trop. Who is the real party? and who is the creditor?

Fab. The writ was sued out against Mr. Golding, at the suit of Mr. Denier. I had but just settled some affairs very essential to Mr. Golding's interest; and did not know of his return till the moment I had placed him beyond danger. Coming home, however, in the dusk of the evening, the catchpoles lay in wait near the house, touched me on the shoulder, and presented their authority. I readily obeyed, submitting to an arrest in the character of Mr. Golding, and glad of an opportunity of exposing the false professions of a pretended friend to the family.

Trop. Well, this seems right enough;—and yet, somehow, I don't like it neither.—I don't love turning and doubling.—I love to go strait forwards, Mr. Fable.

Fab. The best road will wind sometimes, you know. Have a little patience; we shall soon be at the end of our journey.

Enter Snap.

Snap. More company, sir.—Walk up, gentlemen; walk up, ladies. The stairs is a little dark; but there's no danger.

Enter Golding, Mrs. Golding, Mrs. Carlton, Lydia, and Beverley.

[Exit Snap.]

Fab. Mr. Golding, I am happy to see you returned.—Ladies, you're welcome.—Beverley, how do you?—Well, Mr. Golding, how do you like my new apartments?

K

Gold.

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Gold. Like?—I like nothing I have seen or heard of you since my coming from the Indies. Out of doors, I hear, you have almost made me a bankrupt.—At home, I find, you have made me a fool.

Fab. How so, Mr. Golding?

Gold. Have not you made yourself this young gentleman's sole trustee and creditor?

Fab. He has made me so, I confess.

Gold. And did not you persuade him to it by a Canterbury tale of letters from me, losses in India, and the devil knows what, when you had no more authority to talk of me, than of the pope or the great mogul? Had you any such letters from me? Answer me that, sir.

Fab. No, I had not.

Gold. I told you so.—And did you ever hear that I had any losses in India?

Fab. Never.

Gold. There again!—Did not I tell you so!—And what the plague did you mean by all those falsehoods and forgeries? Eh, Mr. Fable?

Fab. To serve you, and maintain the credit of the house.

Gold. And a very creditable way our affairs are in, truly! One moment I learn that you are our sole creditor; and the next moment I find that our sole creditor is so much in debt himself, that he is lodged in a sponging-house.

Fab. Very true; even so, sir.

Trop. P'sha! plague of your cool blood! I can't bear it. Why does not the man speak out, and tell the whole story?—Look ye, Mr. Golding; he is a very honest fellow; and all he has done was entirely for your service.

Gold. Oh ho, sir! Are you there, old Smoke-a-pipe? What, my old friend, that eat curries and smoked sagars with me at Bengal!—are you
come

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come again?—Where's the money I sent by you?

Trop. There, old Fable; you see what a pretty figure I have made.

Fab. Mr. Golding will soon know you better, and entertain a proper respect for you.

Gold. I am finely entertained by you both. You speak for him, and he vouches for you—and I don't know what to make of either of you. But, to come to a right understanding, be so good as to tell me, Mr. Fable, whether you did not receive a very large remittance from India, in favour of this young lady?

Fab. I did.

Gold. Very well.—You must know then, sir, that her friends have appointed me joint-trustee, with a power to pay the whole sum into her own hands immediately. She has a present occasion for it, and desires to receive it directly.

Lyd. I do, I do, sir, in order to apply it for the relief of Mr. Beverley.

Bev. Generous, too generous Lydia! Ruin should not prevail on me to touch a single doit of it.

Gold. Please to let us touch it, however, Mr. Fable.

Fab. Impossible.

Gold. Impossible! How so? You received it safe—did not you?

Fab. I do not deny it.

Gold. Where is it then?

Fab. Not in my hands at present; nor can I advance any part of it within this fortnight or three weeks.

Gold. Three weeks!—We can't stay three days, or three hours, sir.

Bev. My Lydia defrauded too!—Confusion!

Mrs. Carl. The child's money gone!

Trop.

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Trop. What the plague! Can't you produce the money, Fable?

Fab. I cannot indeed, friend.

Trop. Friend! Don't call me your friend—I am not your friend—never will be your friend—never speak to you as long as I live.

Bev. Are these your lessons of morality, Mr. Fable? Have you reproached me for intemperate indulgence of my passions, while you were yourself practising deliberate villainy?

Gold. Ah! he has embezzled the money, as sure as I live—Who's here, Mr. Denier!—Your servant, sir!—

Enter Denier and Capias.

Den. Your's, sir. I am sorry, Mr. Golding, to have been reduced to the necessity of taking so disagreeable a step as this may appear to you.

Gold. Disagreeable? not in the least disagreeable; I take it rather kind of you, and I am very glad to see you.

Den. I am happy to find you consider the matter so fairly. I had rather have avoided it; but being advised that it would essentially promote my interest, and not affect your own, I hope you will excuse it, and indeed rejoice at an opportunity of giving a preference to a friend, instead of involving him with your common acquaintance.

Gold. Hey-day! What now? Have I lost my senses, or every body about me lost theirs? I don't understand a word you say, what you mean, or what you drive at.

Cap. My client refers to the bill of Middlesex, taken out against you, and served on you yesterday evening, under which you were arrested, and are now in Mr. Snap's custody.

Gold. I arrested!—Where is Mr. Snap? Here, house!

Enter

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Enter Snap.

Snap. Did your honour call, fir?

Gold. Pray Mr. Snap, did you arrest me last night?—Did you serve any writ upon me, Mr. Snap?

Snap. Not I, fir!—not upon your honour—I arrested Mr. Golding.

Gold. Mr. Golding!—So it seems I am not come to myself again yet then!—You, Mr. Sagar, did you help to serve the writ, friend? (*to Tro-pick.*)

Den. 'Sdeath, Mr. Capias, there seems to be some mistake here.

Cap. Truly there doth appear to have been a wrongful arrest.

Snap. Not at all, fir.—I knows Mr. Golding well enough—There he stands! (*pointing to Fable*) I shewed him the writ, and he came along with me at once. Did not you, fir?

Fab. I did.—I submitted to go with you, thinking it might be of service to my friend, and a punishment to his false-hearted creditor.

Trop. This action looks honestly of old Fable, after all—and yet the money—I don't know what to make of him.

Gold. Nor I neither.

Bev. But Denier's treachery! I could not have believed it!

Gold. No to be sure! but you shall hear of it, fir, (*to Denier*) and to your cost too, I promise you! I'll sue you for damages, and Mr. Fable shall bring his action for false imprisonment—we'll punish you.

Den. Indeed! it is time to look about me then—But you had best have let the business sleep—I have my revenge in my own hands, I assure you—I have a little packet here—

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Gold. Well! what of that, fir?

Den. Nay, nothing—only a little news from Bengal.

Gold. Eh!

Den. Very interesting to a certain lady, not a hundred miles from this place at present.

(Looking at Mrs. Golding.)

Mrs. Gold. How! what's this!

Fab. What does he drive at?

Gold. I wish he'd be quiet.

Den. When you have perused this letter, Mrs. Golding—

Mrs. Gold. Well, fir!

Den. You will find, madam—

Gold. Don't believe a word he says!

Mrs. Gold. You won't let me hear what he says.

Den. Poor gentleman! his fears overcome him, but I'll put him out of his pain in an instant. This letter, madam, arrived it seems by the same ships with Mr. Golding, and will inform you, madam, that this grave old gentleman has had a connexion in India with another lady—

Mrs. Gold. My husband!

Gold. (aside.) Oh plague! I'm betrayed, blown, and undone!

Den. That this young lady is no other than his daughter—

Mrs. Gold. Lydia!

Den. That my correspondent in India, who is his friend, consigned her to my family, knowing our connection and acquaintance with your own—and that Mr. Golding himself forwarded the late remittance in her favour, meaning to give a colour to an intention he had formed of marrying Miss Lydia to Beverley—All these circumstances my correspondent refers to, as things of course in his

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his letter, thinking that Mr. Golding had no objection to my being acquainted with them. Read, read, madam ! *(Gives the letter.)*

Gold. (aside) Dead and buried ! I wish I was at Bengal now, or in the Black-hole at Calcutta !

Fab. And so this last confidence, like every other, you have betrayed, sir. Is this your vindication ?

Den. No, but my revenge, sir, extorted from me by great provocation—Before you open an account against me, see that you are able to answer all my demands upon you. Take care of the main chance—As to your action at law, my friend Capias here knows I may despise it. If the officer has made a false arrest, let the officer answer it.—I have no concern but to take care of myself you know ; so come along Mr. Capias !

Cap. I attend you, sir. [*Ex. Denier and Capias.*]

Bev. Fool that I have been ! false as my other friends appeared, I still reposed an entire confidence in his fidelity.

Fab. Sordid, execrable, narrow-minded rascal !

Mrs. Gold. Here's baseness and treachery ! *(after reading the letter.)* Was ever any thing so scandalous ! Concealed children, intrigues in India, and ladies in a corner !

Bev. Well, but Mrs. Golding—

Mrs. Gold. When he is at home with his family, he is as grave, and dry, and sober as a judge, forsooth ! and yet when he gets abroad he can be as gay, and as prodigal, as a young nobleman just come to his title and estate.

Fab. He may have been to blame, madam : but—

Mrs. Gold. To blame, Mr. Fable ! What ! these were his India voyages then ! this was his business at Bengal ! these were his large remittances truly ! squandering his fortune, and what was my right,

I

Mr

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Mr. Fable, upon kept madams, Eastern princesses, black-a-moor harlots, and natural children !

Mrs. Carl. Nay—don't say that, Mrs. Golding ! Miss Lydia was born in lawful wedlock, I assure you, madam.

Mrs. Gold. What ! has he got two wives then ?

Mrs. Carl. No—dear me, madam—Miss Lydia's mother was dead and buried before his marriage with you, madam.

Bev. My Lydia's uneasiness is insupportable. Shock her no further I beseech you, madam !

Mrs. Gold. Do you think I have been well treated, sir ?

Bev. The story is but new to me, madam ; but the main particular is Mr. Golding's first marriage, which, I apprehend, has been kept secret merely from the notion of its being disagreeable to your family.

Mrs. Gold. And is this the case, sir ?

Gold. It is indeed—no further harm, I assure you—I should have mentioned the affair to be sure—but—

Enter Snap.

Snap. Here's one muster Check below axes for one muster Fable.

Fab. Oh, desire him to walk up, sir ;—now set your heart at rest about my conduct, friend.

Trop. You must make all matters clear then : for at present I don't half understand you.

Fab. Here comes an interpreter.

Enter Check.

Well, Check, have you settled the business ?

Check. I have, sir. Mr. Beverley's differences are all paid. I have acquittances from the parties, and the whole account is closed, sir.

Bev. Amazment !

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Gold. What is the money gone that way then? None of it embezzled! Eh, Check!

Check. Embezzled? Heaven bless your honour! he has made free to borrow the money left in his hands indeed: but then he has applied all that he could command of his own into the bargain. Embezzled indeed! No, no, Mr. Fable cheats nobody but himself, sir.

Fab. Every particular, Mr. Golding, I am ready to explain. I shall say nothing in vindication or apology for my conduct. The motives on which I have acted are obvious.

Trop. So they are—so they are, friend!—Give me your hand, old Fable! give me your hand! I see you are an honest fellow at last, and I am not ashamed to acknowledge you.

Gold. And I am much obliged to you! I have enough and more than enough to stand the shock of our affairs, repay you with interest, and establish our credit; for, thank heaven, I have been employing my time abroad better than my young partner has done at home.

Mrs. Gold. Oh you have been very finely employed to be sure!

Fab. Come, come, this should be a day of general happiness; as an instance of your universal good opinion of me, let me have influence enough to make peace between Mr. and Mrs. Golding; and as an earnest of their reconciliation, let them give their joint consent to unite Lydia and Beverley, and ratify their happiness!

Bev. Mrs. Golding!—sir!

Mrs. Gold. What says her fine papa to it?

Gold. Why, if Lydia—

Mrs. Carl. Heaven bless her, she doats on him.

Lyd. Yes, I will own, my dear father, that the change in Mr. Beverley has removed the only objection that I could ever make to him; and I will

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not blush to confess that the future happiness of my life depends on him.

Fab. Then every thing is adjusted. I give you joy, my friends.

Trop. And I give you joy too. You have puzzled me confoundedly, I confess—I said you were an honest fellow—I knew you were an honest fellow at bottom—but it was a damned long way to the bottom for all that, old Fable.

Fab. My conduct has been mysterious, I confess, friend—perhaps, in some degree culpably so—but whenever I puzzled you, be assured I no less embarrassed myself. The least deviation from the strait path is attended with difficulties; and though I have always meant honestly, and thought I acted uprightly, I have had ample reason to experience the convenience and necessity, as well as the beauty of truth.

T H E E N D.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. BULKLEY*.

WHEN plays are o'er, by Epilogue we're able,
Thro' moral strainers, to refine the fable;
Again the field of comedy to glean
From what the author did, or did not mean;
Or, in a gayer mood, on malice bent,
Quite topsy-turvy turn the bard's intent.
Shall we, ye criticks, to-night's play deride?
Or shall we, ladies, take the milder side?
Suppose for once we leave the beaten road,
And try, by turns, the harsh and gentle mode;
A kind of critick country-dance begin;
Right hand and left, cross over, figure in!

The critick first strikes off, condemns each scene,
The tale, the bard, and thus he vents his spleen:
"While books lie open on each mouldy stall,
Bills plaister posts, songs paper ev'ry wall,
At ev'ry corner hungry minds may feed,
Wisdom cries out, and he that runs may read.
On learned alms were playwrights ever fed,
And scraps of poetry their daily bread.
Ev'n Shakespeare would unthread the novel's maze,
Or build on penny histories his plays.
From paltry ballads Rowe extracted Shore,
Which lay like metal buried in the ore.
To jump at once to bards of later days,
What are the riff-raff of our modern plays?"

* On account of the length of this Epilogue, many lines are omitted at the Theatre.

Their

EPILOGUE.

Their native dulness all in books intrench ;
Mere scavengers of Latin, Greek, and French,
Sweep up the learned rubbish, dirt, and dust,
Or from old iron try to file the rust.
Give me the bard whose fiery disposition
Quickens at once, and learns by intuition ;
Lifts up his head to think, and, in a minute,
Ideas make a hurly-burly in it ;
Struggling for passage, there ferment and bubble,
And thence run over without further trouble ;
Till out comes play or poem, as they feign
Minerva issued from her father's brain !
Be all original—struck out at once ;
Who borrows, toils, or labours, is a dunce :
Genius, alas ! is at the lowest ebb ;
And none, like spiders, spin their own fine web.
What wonder, if with some success they strive
With wax and honey to enrich the hive,
If all within their compass they devour,
And, like the bee, steal sweets from ev'ry flow'r ?
Old books, old plays, old thoughts will never do :
Originals for me, and something new !”

“ New ? (cries the lady) Pr'ythee, man, have done !
We know there's nothing new beneath the sun.
Weave, like the spider, from your proper brains,
And take at last a cobweb for your pains !
What is invention ? 'Tis not thoughts innate ;
Each head at first is but an empty pate.
'Tis but retailing from a wealthy hoard
The thoughts which observation long has stor'd,
Combining images with lucky hit,
Which sense and education first admit ;

Who

E P I L O G U E.

Who, borrowing little from the common store,
Mends what he takes, and from his own adds more,
He is original ; or inspiration
Never fill'd bard of this, or other nation,
And Shakespeare's art is merely imitation.
For 'tis a truth long prov'd beyond all doubt,
Where nothing's in, there's nothing can come out.

Modes oft may change, and old give way to new.
Or vary betwixt London and Peru ;
Yet here, and every where the general frame
Of nature and of man is still the same :
Huge ruffs and farthingales are out of fashion ;
But still the human heart's the seat of passion :
And he may boast his genius stands the test,
Who paints our passions and our humours best.

Censure not all ; to praise let all aspire ;
For emulation fans the poet's fire.
Put not one grand extinguisher on plays ;
But with kind snuffers gently mend their blaze.

While other licenc'd lotteries prevail,
Our bard, by ticklish lott'ry, tempts a sale,
Prints the particulars of his Musæum,
And boldly calls the public in to see 'em :
Their calcuation must his fate reveal,
Who ventures all in the dramatic wheel.

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